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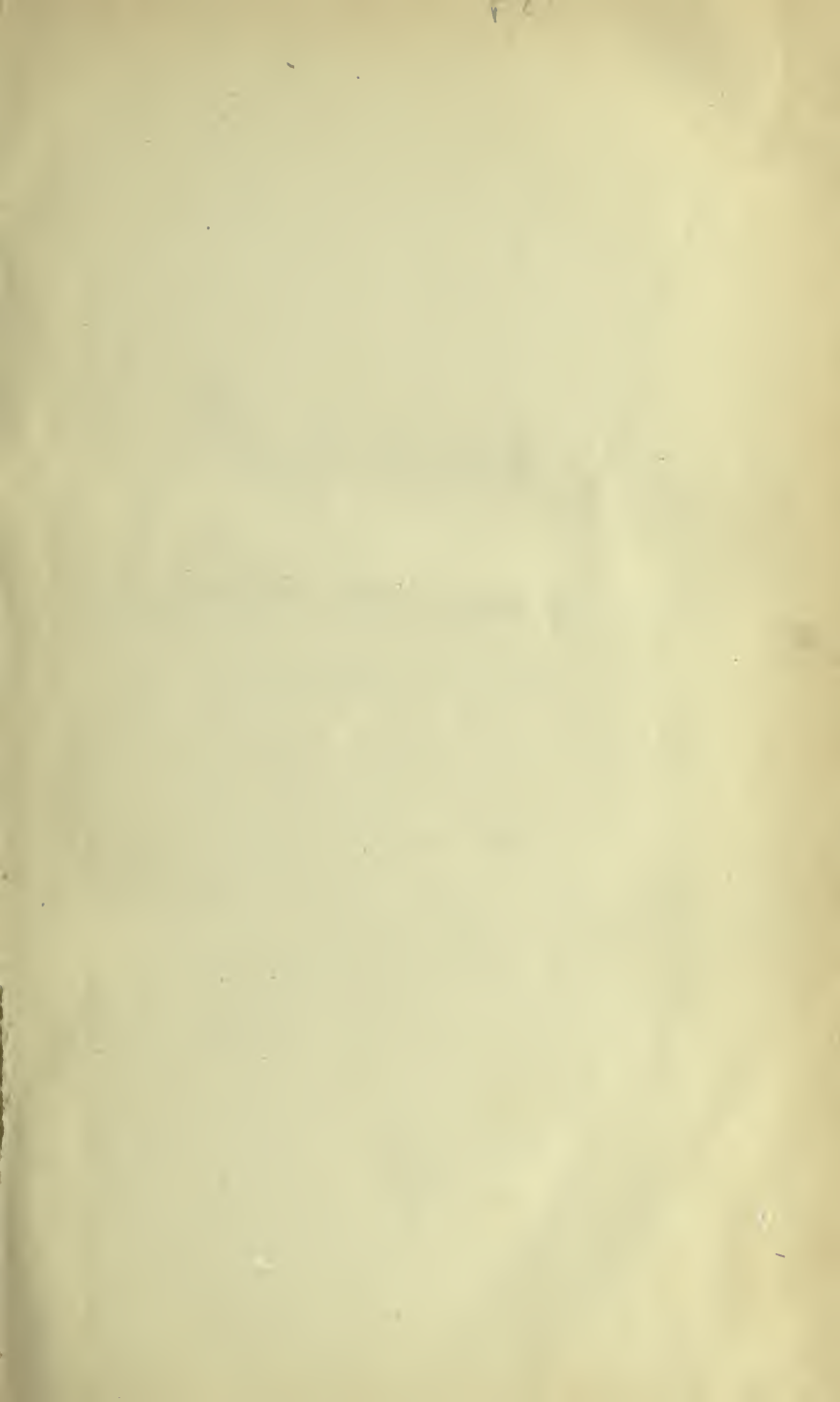
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Chaucer's Translation  
of  
Boethius's "De Consolatione  
Philosophie."

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Chaucer's Translation

of

Boethius's "De Consolatione  
Philosophiæ."



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BY

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## INTRODUCTION.

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WHEN master hands like those of Gibbon and Hallam have sketched the life of *Boethius*, it is well that no meaner man should attempt to mar their pictures. They drew, perhaps, the most touching scene in Middle-age literary history,—the just man in prison, awaiting death, consoled by the Philosophy that had been his light in life, and handing down to posterity for their comfort and strength the presence of her whose silver rays had been his guide as well under the stars of Fortune as the mirk of Fate. With Milton in his dark days, Boece in prison could say,—

‘I argue not  
Against Heaven’s hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer  
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?  
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied  
In liberty’s defence, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.’

For, indeed, the echoes of Boethius, Boethius, rang out loud from every corner of European Literature. An Alfred awoke them in England, a Chaucer, a Caxton would not let them die; an Elizabeth revived them among the glorious music of her reign.<sup>1</sup> To us, though far off, they come with a sweet sound. ‘The angelic’ Thomas Aquinas commented on him, and many others followed the saint’s steps. Dante read him, though, strange to say, he speaks of the

<sup>1</sup> Other translations are by John Walton of Osney, in verse, in 1410 (Reg. MS. 18, A 13), first printed at Tavistock in 1525, and to be edited some time or other for the E. E. T. S. An anonymous prose version in the Bodleian. George Coluile, alias Coldewel, 1556; J. T. 1609; H. Conningesbye, 1664; Lord Preston, 1695, 1712; W. Causton, 1730; Redpath, 1785; R. Duncan, 1789; anon. 1792 (Lowndes).

Consolation as 'a book not known by many.'<sup>1</sup> Belgium had her translations—both Flemish<sup>2</sup> and French<sup>3</sup>; Germany hers,<sup>4</sup> France hers,<sup>5</sup> Italy hers.<sup>6</sup> The Latin editors are too numerous to be catalogued here, and manuscripts abound in all our great libraries.

No philosopher was so bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of Middle-age writers as Boethius. Take up what writer you will, and you find not only the sentiments, but the very words of the distinguished old Roman. And surely we who read him in Chaucer's tongue, will not refuse to say that his full-circling meed of glory was other than deserved. Nor can we marvel that at the end of our great poet's life, he was glad that he had swelled the chorus of Boethius' praise; and 'of the translacioun of Boece de Consolacioun,' thanked 'oure Lord Ihesu Crist and his moder, and alle the seintes in heuen.'

The impression made by Boethius on Chaucer was evidently very deep. Not only did he translate him directly, as in the present work, but he read his beloved original over and over again, as witness the following list, incomplete of course, of passages from Chaucer's poems translated more or less literally from the *De Consolatione*:

## I. LOVE.

Wost thou nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,  
That who schal yeve a lover eny lawe,  
Love is a grettere lawe, by my pan,  
Then may be yeve to (of) eny erthly man?

(*Knightes Tale, Aldine Series*, vol. ii. p. 36, 37.)

But what is he þat may zeue a lawe to loueres. loue is a gretter lawe and a strengere to hym self þan any lawe þat men may zeuen.

(*Chaucer's Prose Translation*, p. 108.)

*Quis legem det amantibus?*

*Major lex amor est sibi.*—(Boeth., lib. iii. met. 12.)

<sup>1</sup> Dante, in his *Convito*, says, "Misimi a legger quello non conosciuto da molti libro di Boezio, nel quale captivo e discacciato consolato s'avea."

<sup>2</sup> Printed at Ghent, 1485.

<sup>3</sup> By Reynier de Seinct Trudon, printed at Bruges, 1477.

<sup>4</sup> An old version of the 11th cent., printed by Graff, and a modern one printed at Nuremberg, 1473.

<sup>5</sup> By Jean de Méung, printed at Paris, 1494.

<sup>6</sup> By Varchi, printed at Florence, 1551; Parma, 1798.

## II. A DRUNKEN MAN.

A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,  
But he not<sup>1</sup> which the righte wey is thider.

(*Knightes Tale*, vol. ii. p. 39.)

*Ryzt as a dronke man not nat<sup>2</sup> by whiche pape he may retourne home to hys house.*—(Chaucer's Trans., p. 67.)

*Sed velut ebrius, domum quo tramite revertatur, ignorat.*

(Boeth., lib. iii. pr. 2.)

## III. THE CHAIN OF LOVE.

The firste moevere of the cause above,  
Whan he first made the fayre cheyne of love,  
Gret was theeffect, and heigh was his entente ;  
Wel wist he why, and what therof he mente ;  
*For with that faire cheyne of love he bond  
The fyr, the watir, the eyr, and eek the lond  
In certeyn boundes, that they may not flee.*

(*Knightes Tale*, p. 92.)

That þe world with stable feith / varieth acordable chaungynges // þat the contraryos qualite of elementz holden amonge hem self aliaunce perdurable / þat phebus the sonne with his goldene chariet / bryngeth forth the rosene day / þat the mone hath commaundement ouer the nyhtes // whiche nyhtes hesperus the eue sterre hat[h] browt // þat þe se gredy to flouen constreyneth with a certeyn ende hise floodes / so þat it is nat l[e]ueful to stretche hise brode termes or bowndes vp-on the erthes // þat is to seyn to couere alle the erthe // Al this a-cordaunce of thinges is bownden with looue / þat gouerneth erthe and see / and [he] hath also commaundementz to the heuenes / and yif this looue slakede the brydelis / alle thinges þat now louen hem to-gederes / wolden maken a batayle contynuely and stryuen to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde / the which they now leden in acordable feith by fayre moeuynges // this looue halt to-gideres poeples / ioygned with an hooly bond / and knytteth sacrament of maryages of chaste looues // And loue enditeth lawes to trewe felawes // O weleful weere mankynde / yif thilke loue þat gouerneth heuene governed yowre corages /—(Chaucer's *Boethius*, bk. ii. met. 8.)

Quod mundus stabili fide  
Concordes variat vices,  
Quod pugnantia semina  
Fœdus perpetuum tenent,  
Quod Phœbus roseum diem  
Curru provehit aureo,  
Ut quas duxerit Hesperus

<sup>1</sup> The Harl. MS. reads *not nat*, to the confusion of the metre.

<sup>2</sup> = ne wot nat = knows not.

Phœbe noctibus imperet,  
 Ut fluctus avidum mare  
 Certo fine coerceat,  
 Ne terris liceat vagis  
 Latos tundere terminos ;  
*Hanc rerum seriem ligat,*  
*Terras ac pelagus regens,*  
*Et cælo imperitans amor.*  
 Hic si fræna remisertit,  
 Quicquid nunc amat invicem,  
 Bellum continuo geret :  
 Et quam nunc socia fide  
 Pulcris motibus incitant,  
 Certent solvere machinam.  
 Hic sancto populos quoque  
 Junctos fœdere continet,  
 Hic et conjugii sacrum  
 Castis nectit amoribus,  
 Hic fidis etiam sua  
 Dictat jura sodalibus.  
 O felix hominum genus,  
 Si vestros animos amor,  
 Quo cælum regitur, regat.—(*Boeth.*, lib. ii. met. 8.)

Love, that of erth and se hath governaunce !  
 Love, that his hestes hath in hevене hye !  
 Love, that with an holsom alliaunce  
 Halt peples joyned, as hym liste hem gye !  
 Love, that knetteth law and compaignye,  
 And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle !

(*Troilus & Cryseyde*, st. 243, vol. iv. p. 296.)

That, that the world with faith, which that is stable  
 Dyverseth so, his stoundes concordynge ;—  
 That elementz, that ben so discordable,  
 Holden a bond, perpetually durynge ;—  
 That Phebus mot his rosy carte forth brynge,  
 And that the mone hath lordschip overe the nyghte ;—  
 Al this doth Love, ay heryed be his myght !

That, that the se, that gredy is to flowen,  
 Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so  
 Hise flodes, that so fiersly they ne growen  
 To drenchen erth and alle for everemo ;  
 And if that Love aught lete his brydel go,  
 Al that now loveth asonder sholde lepe,  
 And lost were al that Love halt now to kepe.

(*Ibid.* st. 244, 245.)



IV. MUTABILITY DIRECTED AND LIMITED BY AN IMMUTABLE AND  
DIVINE INTELLIGENCE.

That same prynce and moevere eek, quod he,  
Hath stabled, in this wrecched world adoun,  
Certeyn dayes and duracioun  
To alle that er engendrid in this place,  
Over the whiche day they may nat pace,  
Al mowe they yit wel here dayes abregge;

. . . . .  
Than may men wel by this ordre discerne  
That thilke moevere stabul is and eterne.

. . . . .  
And therfore of his wyse purveaunce  
He hath so wel biset his ordenaunce,  
That spices of thinges and progressiouns  
Schullen endure by successiouns  
And nat eterne be, withoute any lye.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 92, 93.)

þe engendrynge of alle þinges quod she and alle þe progressiouns of muuable nature. and alle þat moeneþ in any manere takiþ hys causes. hys ordre. and hys formes. of þe stablenesse of þe deuyne þouzt [and thilke deuyne thowht] þat is yset and put in þe toure. þat is to seyne in þe heyzt of þe simplicite of god. stablisþ many manere gyses to þinges þat ben to don.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, bk. iv. pr. 6, p. 134.)

V. THE PART IS DERIVED FROM THE WHOLE, THE IMPERFECT  
FROM THE PERFECT.

Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,  
That every partye dyryveth from his hool.  
For nature hath nat take his bygynnyng  
Of no partye ne cantel of a thing,  
But of a thing that parfyt is and stable,  
Descendyng so, til it be corumpable.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 92.)

For al þing þat is cleped inperfit . is proued inperfit by þe amenusynge of perfeccioun . or of þing þat is perfit . and her-of comeþ it . þat in euery þing general . yif þat . þat men seen any þing þat is inperfit . certys in þilke general þer mot ben somme þing þat is perfit. For yif so be þat perfeccioun is don away . men may nat þinke nor seye fro whennes þilke þing is þat is cleped inperfit . For þe nature of þinges ne token nat her bygynnyng of þinges amenused and inperfit . but it procediþ of þingus þat ben al hool . and absolut . and descendþ so doune in-to outerest þinges and in-to þingus empty and wiþ-oute fruyt .

but as I haue shewed a litel her byforne . þat yif þer be a blisfulnesse þat be frele and vein and inperfit . þer may no man doute . þat þer nys som blisfulnesse þat is sad stedfast and perfit.—(bk. iii. pr. 10, p. 89.)

Omne enim quod imperfectum esse dicitur, id deminutione perfecti imperfectum esse perhibetur. Quo fit ut si in quolibet genere imperfectum quid esse videatur, in eo perfectum quoque aliquod esse necesse sit. Etenim perfectione sublata, unde illud, quod imperfectum perhibetur, extiterit, ne fingi quidem potest. *Neque enim ab diminutis inconsummatisque natura rerum cepit exordium, sed ab integris absolutisque procedens in hæc extrema atque effæta dilabitur.* Quod si, uti paulo ante monstravimus, est quædam boni fragilis imperfecta felicitas, esse aliquam solidam perfectamque non potest dubitari.—(*Boeth.*, lib. iii. pr. 10.)

## VI. GENTILITY.

For gentilnesse nys but renomé  
Of thin auncestres, for her heigh bounté  
Which is a straunge thing to thy persone.

(*The Wyf of Bathes Tale*, vol. ii. p. 241.)

For if þe name of gentilesse be referred to renoun and clernesse of linage. þan is gentil name but a foreine þing.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 78.)

*Quæ [nobilitas], si ad claritudinem refertur, aliena est.*

(*Boethius*, lib. iii. pr. 6.)

## VII. NERO'S CRUELTY.

No teer out of his eyen for that sighte  
Ne cam; but sayde, a fair womman was sche.  
Gret wonder is how that he couthe or mighte  
Be domesman on hir dede beauté.

(*The Monkes Tale*, vol. iii. p. 217.)

Ne no tere ne wette his face, but he was so hard-herted þat he myȝte ben domesman or iuge of hire dede beauté.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 55.)

Ora non tinxit lacrymis, sed esse  
Censor extincti potuit decoris.

(*Boethius*, lib. ii. met. 6.)

## VIII. PREDESTINATION AND FREE-WILL.

In 'Troylus and Cryseyde' we find the following long passage taken from Boethius, book v. prose 2, 3.

Book iv. st. 134, vol. iv. p. 339.

- (1) Syn God seth every thyng, out of doutaunce,  
And hem disponeth, thourgh his ordinaunce,



In hire merites sothely for to be,  
As they shul comen by predesteyné

## 136

- (2) For som men seyn if God seth al byforne,  
Ne God may not deseived ben pardé !  
Than moot it fallen, theigh men hadde it sworne,  
That purveyaunce hath seyn befor to be,  
Wherfor I seye, that, from eterne, if he  
Hathe wiste byforn our thought ek as oure dede,  
We have no fre choys, as these clerkes rede.

## 137

- (3) For other thoughte, nor other dede also,  
Myghte nevere ben, but swich as purveyaunce,  
Which may nat ben deceyved nevere moo,  
Hath feled byforne, withouten ignoraunce ;  
For if ther myghte ben a variaunce,  
To wrythen out fro Goddes purveyinge,  
Ther nere no prescience of thyng comynge ;

## 138

- (4) But it were rather an opinyon  
Uncertein, and no stedfast forseynge ;  
And certes that were an abusyon  
That God shold han no parfit clere wetyng,  
More than we men, that han douteous wenyng,  
But swich an erreure upon God to gesse  
Were fals, and foule, and wikked corsednesse.

## 139

- (5) They seyn right thus, that thyng is nat to come,  
For that the prescience hath seyne byfore  
That it shal come ; but they seyn that therfore  
That it shal come, therfor the purveyaunce  
Woot it bifore, withouten ignoraunce.

## 140

- (6) And in this manere this necessité  
Retourneth in his part contrarye agayn ;  
For nedfully byhoveth it not to be,  
That thilke thynges fallen in certeyn  
That ben purveyed ; but nedly, as they seyne,  
Bihoveth it that thynges, which that falle,  
That thei in certein ben purveied alle.

## 141

- (7) I mene as though I labourede me in this,  
To enqueren which thyngge cause of whiche thyngge be ;
- (8) As, whether that the prescience of God is  
The certein cause of the necessité  
Of thynges that to comen ben, pardé !  
Or, if necessité of thyngge comyngge  
Be cause certein of the purveyinge.

## 142

- (9) But now nenforce I me nat in shewyngge  
How the ordre of causes stant ; but wel woot I  
That it bihoveth that the bifallyngge  
Of thynges, wiste bifor certeinly,  
Be necessarie, al seme it nat therby  
That prescience put fallyngge necessaire  
To thyngge to come, al falle it foule or faire.

## 143

- (10) For, if ther sit a man yonde on a see, [seat]  
Than by necessité bihoveth it,  
That certes thyn opinioun soth be,  
That wenest or coniectest that he sit ;  
And, further over, now ayeinwarde yit,  
Lo right so is it on the part contrarie,  
As thus,—nowe herkene, for I wol nat tarie :—

## 144

- (11) I sey, that if the opinion of the  
Be soth for that he sit, than seye I this,  
That he moot sitten by necessité ;  
And thus necessité in either is,  
For in hym nede of sittyngge is, ywis,  
And in the, nede of soth ; and thus forsoth  
Ther mot necessité ben in yow bothe.

## 145

- (12) But thow maist seyne, the man sit nat therefore,  
That thyn opinioun of his sittyngge sothe is ;  
But rather, for the man sat there byfore,  
Therfor is thyn opinioun soth, ywys ;  
And I seye, though the cause of soth of this  
Cometh of his sittyngge, yet necessité  
Is interchaunged both in hym and the.

## 146

- (13) Thus in the same wyse, out of doutaunce,  
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,  
My resonyng of Goddes purveiaunce,  
And of the thynges that to comen be ; . . .

## 147

- (14) For although that for thyng shal come, ywys,  
Therfor it is purveyed certeynly,  
Nat that it cometh for it purveied is ;  
Yet, natheles, bihoveth it nedfully,  
That thyng to come be purveied trewly ;  
Or elles thynges that purveied be,  
That they bitiden by necessité.

## 148

- (15) And this sufficeth right ynough, certeyn,  
For to distruye oure fre choys everydele.

(1) Quæ tamen ille ab æterno cuncta prospiciens providentiæ cernit intuitus, et suis quæque meritis prædestinata disponit. . . . (*Boethius*, lib. v. pr. 2.) . . . . .

(2) Nam si cuncta prospicit Deus neque falli ullo modo potest, evenire necesse est, quod providentia futurum esse præviderit. Quare si ab æterno non facta hominum modo, sed etiam consilia voluntatesque prænoscit, nulla erit arbitrii libertas ;

(3) Neque enim vel factum aliud ullum vel quælibet existere poterit voluntas, nisi quam nescia falli providentia divina præsenſerit. Nam si res aliorum, quam provisæ sunt detorqueri valent, non jam erit futuri firma præscientia ;

(4) Sed opinio potius incerta ; quod de Deo nefas credere iudico.

(5) Aiunt enim non ideo quid esse eventurum quoniam id providentia futurum esse prospexerit ; sed e contrario potius, quoniam quid futurum est, id divinam providentiam latere non possit.

(6) Eoque modo necessarium est hoc in contrariam relabi partem ; neque enim necesse est contingere quæ providentur, sed necesse est quæ futura sunt provideri.

(7) Quasi vero quæ cuiusque rei causa sit,

(8) Præscientiane futurorûm necessitatis an futurorum necessitas providentiæ, laboretur.

(9) At nos illud demonstrare nitamur, quoquo modo sese habeat ordo causarum, necessarium esse eventum præscitarum rerum, etiam si præscientia futuris rebus eveniendi necessitatem non videatur inferre.

(10) Etenim si quispiam sedeat, opinionem quæ eum sedere conjectat veram esse necesse est : at e converso rursus,

(11) Si de quopiam vera sit opinio quoniam sedet eum sedere necesse est. In utroque igitur necessitas inest : in hoc quidem sedendi, at vero in altero veritatis.

(12) Sed non idcirco quisque sedet, quoniam vera est opinio : sed hæc potius vera est, quoniam quempiam sedere præcessit. Ita cum causa veritatis ex altera parte procedat, inest tamen communis in utraque necessitas.

(13) Similia de providentia futurisque rebus ratiocinari patet.

(14) Nam etiam si idcirco, quoniam futura sunt, providentur : non vero ideo, quoniam providentur, eveniunt : nihilo minus tamen a Deo vel ventura provideri, vel provisa evenire necesse est :

(15) Quod ad perimendam arbitrii libertatem solum satis est.

(lib. v. pr. 3.)

See *Chaucer's Boethius*, pp. 154-6.

#### IX. THE GRIEF OF REMEMBERING BYGONE HAPPINESS.

For, of fortunes scharp adversité,  
The worste kynde of infortune is this,  
A man to han ben in prosperité,  
And it remembren, when it passed is.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 226, vol. iv. p. 291.)

Sed hoc est, quod recolentem me vehementius coquit. Nam in omni adversitate fortunæ infelicissimum genus est infortunii, fuisse felicem.<sup>1</sup>—  
(*Boethius*, lib. ii. pr. 4.)

#### X. VULTURES TEAR THE STOMACH OF TITYUS IN HELL.

———Syciphus in Helle,  
Whos stomak fowles tyren everemo,  
That hyghten volturis.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, book i. st. 113, p. 140.)

þe fowel þat hyzt voltor þat etiþ þe stomak or þe giser of ticius.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 107.)

#### XI. THE MUTABILITY OF FORTUNE.

For if hire (Fortune's) whiel stynte any thinge to torne  
Thanne cessed she Fortune anon to be.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. i. st. 122, p. 142.)

If fortune bygan to dwelle stable. she cesed[e] þan to ben fortune.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 32.)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dante, *Inferno*, V. 121.

Nessun maggior dolore  
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice  
Nella miseria; e ciò sa 'l tuo Dottore.



(Compare stanzas 120, 121, p. 142, and stanza 136, p. 146, of 'Troilus and Cryseyde' with pp. 31, 33, 35, and p. 34 of Chaucer's Boethius.)

At omnium mortalium stolidissime, si manere incipit, fors esse desistit.—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 1.)

## XII. WORLDLY SELYNESSE

Imedled is with many a bitternesse.  
 Ful angwyschous than is, God woote, quod she,  
 Condicion of veyn prosperité!  
 For oither joies comen nought yfeere,  
 Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 110, p. 258.)

þe swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is yspranid wiþ many[e] bitter-  
 nesses.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 42.)

—ful anguissous þing is þe condicioun of mans goodes. For  
 eyþer it comeþ al to-gidre to a wyzt. or ellys it lasteþ not perpetuely.  
 (*Ib.* p. 41.)

Quam multis amaritudinibus humanæ felicitatis dulcedo respersa  
 est!—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 4.)

Anxia enim res est humanorum conditio bonorum, et quæ vel nun-  
 quam tota proveniat, vel nunquam perpetua subsistat.—(*Ib.*)

O, brotel wele of mannes joie unstable!  
 With what wight so thow be, or how thow pleye,  
 Oither he woot that thow joie art muable,  
 Or woot it nought, it mot ben on of tweyen:  
 Now if he woot it not, how may he seyen  
 That he hath veray joie and selynesse,  
 That is of ignoraunce ay in distresse?

Now if he woote that joie is transitorie,  
 As every joie of worldly thyng mot fle,  
 Thanne every tyme he that hath in memorie,  
 The drede of lesyng maketh hym that he  
 May in no parfyte selynesse be:  
 And if to lese his joie, he sette not a myte,  
 Than semeth it, that joie is worth ful lite.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 111, 112, vol. iv. p. 258.)

(1) What man þat þis toumblyng welefulnesse leediþ, eiþer he woot  
 þat [it] is changeable. or ellis he woot it nat. And yif he woot it  
 not. what blisful fortune may þer be in þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce.

(2) And yif he woot þat it is changeable. he mot alwey ben adrad  
 þat he ne lese þat þing. þat he ne douteþ nat but þat he may leesen it.

. . . . . For whiche þe continual drede þat he haþ ne suffriþ hym nat to ben weleful. Or ellys yif he leese it he wene[þ] to be dispised and forleten hit. Certis eke þat is a ful lytel goode þat is born wiþ euene hert[e] whan it is loost.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, pp. 43, 44.)

(1) Quem caduca ista felicitas vehit, vel scit eam, vel nescit esse mutabilem. Si nescit, quænam beata sors esse potest ignorantie in cæcitate?

(2) Si scit, metuat necesse est, ne amittat, quod amitti posse non dubitat; quare continuus timor non sinit esse felicem. An vel si amiserit, negligendum putat? Sic quoque perexile bonum est, quod æquo animo feratur amissum.—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 4.)

## XIII. FORTUNE.

## ———Fortune

That semeth trewest when she wol bigyle,

And, when a wight is from hire whiel ithrowe,  
Than laugheth she, and maketh hym the mowe.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 254, vol. iv. p. 299.)

She (Fortune) vseþ ful flatryng familiarité wiþ hem þat she enforceþ to bygyle.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 30.)

. . . . . She lauþeþ and scorneþ þe wepyng of hem þe whiche she haþ maked wepe wiþ hir free wille . . . . . Yif þat a wyȝt is seyn weleful and ouerþrowe in an houre.—(*Ib.* p. 33.)

In book v., stanza 260, vol. v. p. 75, Chaucer describes how the soul of Hector, after his death, ascended 'up to the holughnesse of the seventh spered.' In so doing he seems to have had before him met. 1, book 4, of Boethius, where the 'soul' is described as passing into the heaven's utmost sphere, and looking down on the world below. See *Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 110, 111.

Ætas Prima is of course a metrical version of lib. ii. met. 5.

Hampole speaks of the wonderful sight of the Lynx; perhaps he was indebted to Boethius for the hint.—(See *Boethius*, book 3, pr. 8, p. 81.)

I have seen the following elsewhere:

(1) Value not beauty, for it may be destroyed by a three days' fever.  
(See *Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 81.)

(2) There is no greater plague than the enmity of thy familiar friend.  
(See *Chaucer's translation*, p. 77.)



Chaucer did not English Boethius second-hand, through any early French version, as some have supposed, but made his translation with the Latin original before him.

Jean de Méung's version, the only early French translation, perhaps, accessible to Chaucer, is not always literal, while the present translation is seldom free or periphrastic, but conforms closely to the Latin, and is at times awkwardly literal. A few passages, taken haphazard, will make this sufficiently clear.

*Et dolor ætatem jussit inesse suam.* And sorow hap comaunded his age to be in me (p. 4).

Et ma douleur commanda a vieillesse  
Entrer en moy / ains quen fust hors ieunesse.

*Mors hominum felix, quæ se nec dulcibus annis  
Inserit, et mæstis sæpe vocata venit.*

þilke deef of mèn is welful þat ne comeþ not in 3eres þat ben swete (i. *mirie*). but comeþ to wrecches often yclepid. (p. 4.)

On dit la mort des homes estre eureuse  
Qui ne vient pas en saison plantureuse  
Mais des tristes moult souuent appellee  
Elle y affuit nue / seche et pelee.

*Querimoniam lacrymabilem.* Wepli compleynte (p. 5). Fr. ma complainte moy esmouuant a pleurs.

*Styli officio.* Wiþ office of poyntel (p. 5). Fr. (que ie reduisse) par escript.

*Inexhaustus.* Swiche . . . þat it ne myzt[e] not be emptid (p. 5). Fr. inconsumptible.

*Scenicas meretriculas.* Comune strumpetis of siche a place þat men clepen þe theatre (p. 6). Fr. ces ribaudelles fardees.

*Precipiti profundo.* In ouer-þrowyng depnesse (p. 7).

[L]As que la pensee de lomme  
Est troublee et plongie comme  
En abisme precipitee  
Sa propre lumiere gaste.

*Nec peruetusta nec incelebris.* Neyþer ouer-oolde ne vnsolempne (p. 11). Fr. desquelz la memoire nest pas trop ancienne ou non recitee.

*Inter secreta otia.* Among my secre restyng whiles (p. 14). Fr. entre mes secrettes et oyseuses estudes.

*Palatini canes.* þe houndys of þe palays (p. 15). Fr. les chiens du palais.

*Masculæ prolis.* Of þi masculyn children (p. 37). Fr. de ta lignie masculine.

*Ad singularem felicitatis tuæ cumulum venire delectat.* It deliteþ me to comen now to þe singuler vphepyng of þi welefulnesse (p. 37). Fr. Il me plait venir au singulier monceau de ta felicite.

*Consulare imperium.* Emperie of consulers (p. 51). Fr. lempire consulaire.

*Hoc ipsum brevis habitaculi.* Of þilke litel habitacle (p. 57). Fr. de cest trespetit habitacle.

*Late patentēs plagas.* þe brode shewyng contreys (p. 60).

QViconques tend a gloire vaine

Et le croit estre souueraine

Voye les regions patentēs

Du ciel . . . . .

*Ludens hominum cura.* þe pleiyng besines of men (p. 68).

Si quil tollist par doulz estude

Des hommes la sollicitude . . .

*Hausi cælum.* I took heuene (p. 10). Fr. ie . . . regarday le ciel.

*Certamen aduersum præfectum prætorii communis commodi ratione suscepi.* I took strif azeins þe prouost of þe pretorie for comune profit (p. 15). Fr. ie entrepris lestrif a lencontre du prefect du parlement royal a cause de la commune vtilite.

*At cujus criminis arguimur summam quæris?* But axest þou in somme of what gilt I am accused? (p. 17). Fr. Mais demandes tu la somme du pechie duquel pechie nous sommes arguez?

*Fortuita temeritate.* By fortunouse fortune (p. 26). Fr. par fortuite folie.

*Quos premunt septem gelidi triones.* Alle þe peoples þat ben vndir þe colde sterres þat hyzten þe seuene triones (p. 55). Fr. ceulx de septentrion.

*Ita ego quoque tibi veluti corollarium dabo.* Ryzt so wil I zeue þe here as a corolarie or a mede of coroune (p. 91). Fr. semblablement ie te donneray ainsi que vng correlaire.

*In stadio.* In þe stadie or in þe forlonge (p. 119). Fr. ou (for au) champ.

*Conjecto.* I coniecte (p. 154). Fr. ie coniecture.

*Nimum . . . aduersari ac repugnare videtur.* It semeþ . . . to repugnen and to contrarien gretly. Fr. Ce semble chose trop contraire et repugnante.

*Universitatis ambitum.* Envirounyng of þe vniuersite (p. 165). Fr. lauironnement de luniuersalite.

*Rationis universum.* Vniuersite of resoun (p. 165). Fr. luniuersalite de Raison.

*Scientiam nunquam deficientis instantiæ rectius æstimabis.* þou shalt demen [it] more ryztfully þat it is science of presence or of instaunce þat neuer ne fayleþ (p. 174). Fr. mais tu la diras plus droitement et mieulx science de instante presentialite non iamais defaillant mais eternelle.

Many of the above examples are very bald renderings of the original, and are only quoted here to show that Chaucer did not make his translation from the French.

Chaucer is not always felicitous in his translations:—thus he translates *clavus atque gubernaculum* by *keye* and a *stiere* (p. 103), and *compendium* (gain, acquisition) by *abreggyng* (abridging, curtailment), p. 151. Many terms make their appearance in English for the first time,—and most of them have become naturalized, and are such as we could ill spare. Some few are rather uncommon, as *gouvernaile* (gubernaculum), p. 27; *arbitre* (arbitrium), p. 154. As Chaucer takes the trouble to explain *inestimable* (inæstimabilis), p. 158, it could not have been a very familiar term.

Our translator evidently took note of various readings, for on p. 31 he notes a variation of the original. On p. 51 he uses *armurers* (= armures) to render *arma*, though most copies agree in reading *arva*.

There are numerous glosses and explanations of particular passages, which seem to be interpolated by Chaucer himself. Thus he explains what is meant by the *heritage of Socrates* (p. 10, 11); he gives the meaning of *coemption* (p. 15); of *Euripus* (p. 33); of the *porch* (p. 166).<sup>1</sup> Some of his definitions are very quaint; as, for instance, that of Tragedy—‘*a dite of a prosperite for a tyme þat endiþ in wrechednesse*’ (p. 35). One would think that the following definition of Tragedian would be rather superfluous after this,—‘*a maker of dites þat hyzten (are called) tregedies*’ (p. 77).

*Melliflui . . . oris Homerus*

is thus quaintly Englished: *Homer wiþ þe hony mouþe, þat is to seyn. homer wiþ þe swete dites* (p. 153).

<sup>1</sup> See pages 39, 50, 61, 94, 111, 133, 149, 153, 159.



The present translation of the *De Consolatione* is taken from Additional MS. 10,340, which is supposed to be the *oldest* manuscript that exists in our public libraries. After it was all copied out and ready for press, Mr Bradshaw was kind enough to procure me, for the purpose of collation, the loan of the Camb. University MS. Ii. 3. 21, from which the various readings at the foot of the pages are taken.

Had I had an opportunity of examining the Cambridge MS. carefully throughout before the work was so far advanced, I should certainly have selected it in preference to the text now given to the reader. Though not so ancient as the British Museum MS., it is far more correct in its grammatical inflexions, and is no doubt a copy of an older and very accurate text.

The Additional MS. is written by a scribe who was unacquainted with the force of the final *-e*. Thus he adds it to the preterites of strong verbs, which do not require it; he omits it in the preterites of weak verbs where it is wanted, and attaches it to passive participles (of weak verbs), where it is superfluous. The scribe of the Cambridge MS. is careful to preserve the final *-e* where it is a sign (1) of the definite declension of the adjective; (2) of the plural adjective; (3) of the infinitive mood; (4) of the preterite of weak verbs; (5) of present participles;<sup>1</sup> (6) of the 2nd pers. pret. indic. of strong verbs; (7) of adverbs; (8) of an older vowel ending.

The Addit. MS. has frequently *thilk* (singular and plural), and *-nes* (in *wrechednes*, &c.), when the Camb. MS. has *thilke*<sup>2</sup> and *-nesse*.

For further differences the reader may consult the numerous collations at the foot of the page.

If the Chaucer Society obtains that amount of patronage from the literary public which it deserves, but unfortunately has yet not succeeded in getting, so that it may be enabled to go on with the great work which has been so successfully commenced, then the time may come when I shall have the opportunity of editing the Camb. MS. of Chaucer's *Boethius* for that Society, and lovers of Early English Literature will have two texts instead of one.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Canterbury Tales* we find participles in *-yngē*.

<sup>2</sup> It is nearly always *thilkē* in the *Canterbury Tales*.

## APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION.

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THE last of the ancients, and one who forms a link between the classical period of literature and that of the middle ages, in which he was a favourite author, is Boethius, a man of fine genius, and interesting both from his character and his death. It is well known that after filling the dignities of Consul and Senator in the court of Theodoric, he fell a victim to the jealousy of a sovereign, from whose memory, in many respects glorious, the stain of that blood has never been effaced. The *Consolation of Philosophy*, the chief work of Boethius, was written in his prison. Few books are more striking from the circumstances of their production. Last of the classic writers, in style not impure, though displaying too lavishly that poetic exuberance which had distinguished the two or three preceding centuries, in elevation of sentiment equal to any of the philosophers, and mingling a Christian sanctity with their lessons, he speaks from his prison in the swan-like tones of dying eloquence. The philosophy that consoled him in bonds, was soon required in the sufferings of a cruel death. Quenched in his blood, the lamp he had trimmed with a skilful hand gave no more light; the language of Tully and Virgil soon ceased to be spoken; and many ages were to pass away, before learned diligence restored its purity, and the union of genius with imitation taught a few modern writers to surpass in eloquence the Latinity of Boethius.—(Hallam's *Literature of Europe*, i. 2, 4th ed. 1854.)

The Senator Boethius is the last of the Romans whom Cato or Tully could have acknowledged for their countryman. As a wealthy orphan, he inherited the patrimony and honours of the Anician family, a name ambitiously assumed by the kings and emperors of the age; and the appellation of Manlius asserted his genuine or fabulous descent from a race of consuls and dictators, who had repulsed the Gauls from the Capitol, and sacrificed their sons to the discipline of the Republic. In the youth of Boethius the studies of Rome were not totally abandoned; a Virgil is now extant, corrected by the hand of a consul; and the professors of grammar, rhetoric, and jurisprudence, were maintained in their privileges and pensions by the liberality of the Goths. But the erudition of the Latin language was insufficient to satiate his ardent curiosity; and

Boethius is said to have employed eighteen laborious years in the schools of Athens, which were supported by the zeal, the learning, and the diligence of Proclus and his disciples. The reason and piety of their Roman pupil were fortunately saved from the contagion of mystery and magic, which polluted the groves of the Academy, but he imbibed the spirit, and imitated the method, of his dead and living masters, who attempted to reconcile the strong and subtle sense of Aristotle with the devout contemplation and sublime fancy of Plato. After his return to Rome, and his marriage with the daughter of his friend, the patrician Symmachus, Boethius still continued, in a palace of ivory and [glass] to prosecute the same studies. The Church was edified by his profound defence of the orthodox creed against the Arian, the Eutychian, and the Nestorian heresies; and the Catholic unity was explained or exposed in a formal treatise by the *indifference* of three distinct though consubstantial persons. For the benefit of his Latin readers, his genius submitted to teach the first elements of the arts and sciences of Greece. The geometry of Euclid, the music of Pythagoras, the arithmetic of Nicomachus, the mechanics of Archimedes, the astronomy of Ptolemy, the theology of Plato, and the logic of Aristotle, with the commentary of Porphyry, were translated and illustrated by the indefatigable pen of the Roman senator. And he alone was esteemed capable of describing the wonders of art, a sun-dial, a water-clock, or a sphere which represented the motions of the planets. From these abstruse speculations, Boethius stooped, or, to speak more truly, he rose to the social duties of public and private life: the indigent were relieved by his liberality; and his eloquence, which flattery might compare to the voice of Demosthenes or Cicero, was uniformly exerted in the cause of innocence and humanity. Such conspicuous merit was felt and rewarded by a discerning prince: the dignity of Boethius was adorned with the titles of consul and patrician, and his talents were usefully employed in the important station of master of the offices. Notwithstanding the equal claims of the East and West, his two sons were created, in their tender youth, the consuls of the same year. On the memorable day of their inauguration, they proceeded in solemn pomp from their palace to the forum amidst the applause of the senate and people; and their joyful father, the true Consul of Rome, after pronouncing an oration in the praise of his royal benefactor, distributed a triumphal largess in the games of the circus. Prosperous in his fame and fortunes, in his public honours and private alliances, in the cultivation of science and the consciousness of virtue, Boethius might have been styled happy, if that precarious epithet could be safely applied before the last term of the life of man.

A philosopher, liberal of his wealth and parsimonious of his time, might be insensible to the common allurements of ambition, the thirst of gold and employment. And some credit may be due to the asseveration of Boethius, that he had reluctantly obeyed the divine Plato, who enjoins every virtuous citizen to rescue the state from the usurpation of vice and ignorance. For the integrity of his public conduct he appeals to the



memory of his country. His authority had restrained the pride and oppression of the royal officers, and his eloquence had delivered Paulianus from the dogs of the palace. He had always pitied, and often relieved, the distress of the provincials, whose fortunes were exhausted by public and private rapine; and Boethius alone had courage to oppose the tyranny of the Barbarians, elated by conquest, excited by avarice, and, as he complains, encouraged by impunity. In these honourable contests his spirit soared above the consideration of danger, and perhaps of prudence; and we may learn from the example of Cato, that a character of pure and inflexible virtue is the most apt to be misled by prejudice, to be heated by enthusiasm, and to confound private enmities with public justice. The disciple of Plato might exaggerate the infirmities of nature, and the imperfections of society; and the mildest form of a Gothic kingdom, even the weight of allegiance and gratitude, must be insupportable to the free spirit of a Roman patriot. But the favour and fidelity of Boethius declined in just proportion with the public happiness; and an unworthy colleague was imposed to divide and control the power of the master of the offices. In the last gloomy season of Theodoric, he indignantly felt that he was a slave; but as his master had only power over his life, he stood without arms and without fear against the face of an angry Barbarian, who had been provoked to believe that the safety of the senate was incompatible with his own. The Senator Albinus was accused and already convicted on the presumption of *hoping*, as it was said, the liberty of Rome.

“If Albinus be criminal,” exclaimed the orator, “the senate and myself are all guilty of the same crime. If we are innocent, Albinus is equally entitled to the protection of the laws.” These laws might not have punished the simple and barren wish of an unattainable blessing; but they would have shown less indulgence to the rash confession of Boethius, that, had he known of a conspiracy, the tyrant never should. The advocate of Albinus was soon involved in the danger and perhaps the guilt of his client; their signature (which they denied as a forgery) was affixed to the original address, inviting the emperor to deliver Italy from the Goths; and three witnesses of honourable rank, perhaps of infamous reputation, attested the treasonable designs of the Roman patrician. Yet his innocence must be presumed, since he was deprived by Theodoric of the means of justification, and rigorously confined in the tower of Pavia, while the senate, at the distance of five hundred miles, pronounced a sentence of confiscation and death against the most illustrious of its members. At the command of the Barbarians, the occult science of a philosopher was stigmatized with the names of sacrilege and magic. A devout and dutiful attachment to the senate was condemned as criminal by the trembling voices of the senators themselves; and their ingratitude deserved the wish or prediction of Boethius, that, after him, none should be found guilty of the same offence.

While Boethius, oppressed with fetters, expected each moment the sentence or the stroke of death, he composed in the tower of Pavia the

*Consolation of Philosophy*; a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully, but which claims incomparable merit from the barbarism of the times and the situation of the author. The celestial guide, whom he had so long invoked at Rome and Athens, now condescended to illumine his dungeon, to revive his courage, and to pour into his wounds her salutary balm. She taught him to compare his long prosperity and his recent distress, and to conceive new hopes from the inconstancy of fortune. Reason had informed him of the precarious condition of her gifts; experience had satisfied him of their real value; he had enjoyed them without guilt; he might resign them without a sigh, and calmly disdain the impotent malice of his enemies, who had left him happiness, since they had left him virtue. From the earth, Boethius ascended to heaven in search of the SUPREME GOOD; explored the metaphysical labyrinth of chance and destiny, of prescience and free-will, of time and eternity; and generously attempted to reconcile the perfect attributes of the Deity with the apparent disorders of his moral and physical government. Such topics of consolation, so obvious, so vague, or so abstruse, are ineffectual to subdue the feelings of human nature. Yet the sense of misfortune may be diverted by the labour of thought; and the sage who could artfully combine in the same work the various riches of philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, must already have possessed the intrepid calmness which he affected to seek. Suspense, the worst of evils, was at length determined by the ministers of death, who executed, and perhaps exceeded, the inhuman mandate of Theodoric. A strong cord was fastened round the head of Boethius, and forcibly tightened till his eyes almost started from their sockets; and some mercy may be discovered in the milder torture of beating him with clubs till he expired. But his genius survived to diffuse a ray of knowledge over the darkest ages of the Latin world; the writings of the philosopher were translated by the most glorious of the English kings, and the third emperor of the name of Otho removed to a more honourable tomb the bones of a Catholic saint, who, from his Arian persecutors, had acquired the honours of martyrdom and the fame of miracles. In the last hours of Boethius, he derived some comfort from the safety of his two sons, of his wife, and of his father-in-law, the venerable Symmachus. But the grief of Symmachus was indiscreet, and perhaps disrespectful; he had presumed to lament, he might dare to revenge, the death of an injured friend. He was dragged in chains from Rome to the palace of Ravenna; and the suspicions of Theodoric could only be appeased by the blood of an innocent and aged senator.—Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, 1838, vol. vii. p. 45—52 (without the notes).

## INDEX

(Giving the first line of each Metre, the first words of each Prose,  
and the corresponding page of the translation).

Book	Metre	Prose	Page
I	1	— Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi ...	4
,,	—	1 Hæc dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem ...	5
,,	2	— Heu, quam præcipiti mersa profundo ...	7
,,	—	2 Sed medicinæ, inquit, potius tempus est ...	8
,,	3	— Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebræ ...	9
,,	—	3 Haud aliter tristitiæ nebulis dissolutis, hausi cælum ... ..	10
,,	4	— Quisquis composito serenus ævo ...	12
,,	—	4 Sentisne, inquit, hæc, atque animo illabuntur tuo? ... ..	13
✓,,	5	— O stelliferi conditor orbis ...	21
,,	—	5 Hæc ubi continuato dolore delatravi ...	23
,,	6	— Cum Phœbi radiis grave ...	25
,,	—	6 Primum igitur paterisne me pauculis rogationibus	26
,,	7	— Nubibus atris ... ..	29
II	—	1 Posthæc paulisper obticuit ...	29
,,	1	— Hæc cum superba verterit vices dextra ...	33
,,	—	2 Vellem autem pauca tecum fortunæ ipsius ...	33
,,	2	— Si quantas rapidis flatibus incitus ...	35
,,	—	3 His igitur si pro se tecum fortuna loqueretur ...	36
,,	✓3	— Cum polo Phœbus roseis quadrigis ...	39
,,	—	4 Tum ego, Vera, inquam, commemoras ...	39
,,	4	— Quisquis volet perennem ... ..	44

Book	Metre	Prose		Page
II	—	5	Sed quoniam rationum jam in te mearum fo- menta ... ..	45
„	5	—	Felix nimium prior ætas ... ..	50
„	—	6	Quid autem de dignitatibus, potentiaque disseram	51
„	6	—	Novimus quantas dederit ruinas ... ..	55
„	—	7	Tum ego, Scis, inquam, ipsa ... ..	56
„	7	—	Quicumque solam mente præcipiti petit ...	60
„	—	8	Sed ne me inexorabile contra fortunam ...	61
„	8	—	Quod mundus stabili fide ... ..	62
III	—	1	Jam cantum illa finierat ... ..	63
„	1	—	Qui serere ingenuum volet agrum ... ..	64
„	—	2	Tum defixo paululum visu ... ..	64
„	2	—	Quantas rerum flectat habenas ... ..	68
„	—	3	Vos quoque, o terrena animalia ... ..	69
„	3	—	Quamvis fluente dives auri gurgite ... ..	71
„	—	4	Sed dignitates honorabilem reverendumque ...	72
„	4	—	Quamvis se Tyrio superbus ostro ... ..	74
„	—	5	An vero regna regumque familiaritas efficere potentem valent? ... ..	75
„	5	—	Qui se volet esse potentem ... ..	77
„	—	6	Gloria vero quam fallax sæpe, quam turpis est!	77
„	6	—	Omne hominum genus in terris ... ..	78
„	—	7	Quid autem de corporis voluptatibus loquar?	79
„	7	—	Habet omnis hoc voluptas ... ..	80
„	—	8	Nihil igitur dubium est, quin ... ..	80
„	8	—	Eheu, quam miseros tramite devio ... ..	81
„	—	9	Hactenus mendacis formam felicitatis ostendisse	82
„	9	—	O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas ...	87
„	—	10	Quoniam igitur quæ sit imperfecti ... ..	88
„	10	—	Huc omnes pariter venite capti ... ..	94
„	—	11	Assentior, inquam. ... ..	95
„	11	—	Quisquis profunda mente vestigat verum ...	100
„	—	12	Tum ego, Platoni, inquam, vehementer assentior	101
„	12	—	Felix qui potuit boni ... ..	106
IV	—	1	Hæc cum Philosophia, dignitate ... ..	108



Book	Metre	Prose	Page
IV	1	—	Sunt etenim pennæ volucres mihi ... .. 110
„	—	2	Tum ego, Papæ, inquam, ut magna promittis! 112
„	2	—	Quos vides sedere celso ... .. 118
„	—	3	Videsne igitur quanto in cœno probra volvuntur 119
„	3	—	Vela Neritii ducis ... .. 122
„	—	4	Tum ego, Fateor, inquam, nec injuria dici video 123
„	4	—	Quid tantos juvat excitare motus ... .. 130
„	—	5	Hic ego, Video, inquam, quæ sit vel felicitas ... 131
„	5	—	Si quis Arcturi sidera nescit ... .. 132
„	—	6	Ita est, inquam. ... .. 133
„	6	—	Si vis celsi jura tonantis ... .. 143
„	—	7	Jamne igitur vides, quid hæc omnia quæ diximus, consequatur? ... .. 144
„	7	—	Bella bis quinque operatus annis ... .. 147
V	—	1	Dixerat, orationisque cursum ad alia quædam 149
„	1	—	Rupis Achæmeniae scopulis, ubi versa sequentum 151
„	—	2	Animadverto, inquam, idque uti tu dicis, ita esse consentio. ... .. 152
„	2	—	Puro clarum lumine Phœbum ... .. 153
„	—	3	Tum ego, En, inquam, difficiliori rursus am- biguitate confundor. ... .. 154
„	3	—	Quænam discors fœdera rerum ... .. 159
„	—	4	Tum illa, Vetus, inquit, hæc est de Providentia querela ... .. 161
„	4	—	Quondam porticus attulit ... .. 166
„	—	5	Quod si in corporibus sentiendis, quamvis ... 168
„	5	—	Quam variis terras animalia permeant figuris! 170
„	—	6	Quoniam igitur, uti paulo ante monstratum est 171
Appendix.—Ætas Prima			... .. 180
„	Balades de Vilage sanz Peinture		... .. 182





## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

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[I]NCIPIT TABULA LIBRI BOICII DE CONSOLACIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

[*Additional MS. 10,340, fol. 3.*]

### LIBER PRIMUS.

[fol. 3.]

- 1 Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi.
- 2 Hic dum mecum tacitus.
- 3 Heu *quam* precipiti.
- 4 Set medicine inquit tempus.
- 5 Tunc me discussa.
- 6 Haut <sup>1</sup> aliter tristicie. 1 MS. hanc.
- 7 Quisquis composito.
- 8 Sentis ne inquit.
- 9 O stelliferi conditor orbis.
- 10 Hic ubi continuato dolore.
- 11 Cum phebi radijs.
- 12 Primum igitur pateris rogacionibus.
- 13 Nubibus atris condita.

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

### LIBER SECUNDUS.

- 1 Postea paulisper <sup>2</sup> conticuit. 2 MS. lilper.
- 2 Hec cum superba.
- 3 Uellem autem pauca.
- 4 Si quantas rapidis.
- 5 His igitur si *et* pro se.

- 6 Cum primo polo.
- 7 Tunc ego uera inquam.
- 8 Contraque.
- 9 Quisquis ualet perhennem cantus.
- 10 Set cum rationum iam in te.
- 11 Felix in mirum iam prior etas.
- 12 Quid autem de dignitatibus.
- 13 Nouimus quantos dederat.
- 14 Tum ego scis inquam.
- 15 Quicumque solam mente.
- 16 Set ne me inexorabile.
- 17 Quod mundus stabile fide.

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

### LIBER TERCIVS.

- 1 Iam tantum illa.
- 2 Qui serere ingenium.
- 3 Tunc defixo paululum.
- 4 Quantas rerum flectat.
- 5 Uos quoque terrena animalia.
- 6 Quamuis fluenter diues.
- 7 Set dignitatibus.
- 8 Quamuis se tirio.
- 9 An uero regna.
- 10 Qui se ualet esse potentem.
- 11 Gloria uero quam fallax.
- 12 Omne hominum genus in terris.
- 13 Quid autem de corporibus.
- 14 Habet hoc uoluptas.
- 15 Nichil igitur dubium est.
- 16 Heu que miseros tramite.
- 17 Hactenus mendacio formam.
- 18 O qui perpetua.
- 19 Quoniam igitur qui scit.
- 20 Nunc omnes pariter.
- 21 Assencior inquam cuncta.



- 22 *Quisque profunda.*  
 23 *Tunc ego platoni inquam.*  
 24 *Felix qui poterit.*

EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIVS.

LIBER QUARTVS.

- 1 *Hec cum philosophia.*  
 2 *Sunt etenim penne.*  
 3 *Tunc ego pape inquam.*  
 4 *Quos uides sedere celsos.*  
 5 *Uides ne igitur quanto.*  
 6 *U[e]la naricij ducis.*  
 7 *Tunc ego fateor inquam.*  
 8 *Quid tantos iuuat.*  
 9 *Huic ego uideo inquam.*  
 10 *Si quis arcturi<sup>1</sup> sydera.*  
 11 *Ita est inquam.*  
 12 *Si uis celsi iura.*  
 13 *Iam ne igitur uides.*  
 14 *Bella bis quinis.*

EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTVS.

INCIPIT LIBER QVINTVS.

- 1 *Dixerat oracionis que cursum.*  
 2 *Rupis achemenie.*  
 3 *Animaduerto inquam.*  
 4 *Puro clarum lumine.*  
 5 *Tamen ego en inquam.*  
 6 *Que nam discors.*  
 7 *Tamen illa uetus.*  
 8 *Quondam porticus attulit.*  
 9 *Quod si in corporibus.*  
 10 *Quam uarijs figuris.*  
 11 *Quoniam igitur uti paulo ante.*

EXPLICIT LIBER QVINTVS ET VLTIVS.



<sup>1</sup> MS. arcturi.

[\* fol. 3 b.]

## \* LIBER PRIMUS.

[The fyrste  
Metur.]

INCIPIT LIBER BOICII DE CONSOLACIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi.

Boethius deplores  
his misfortunes  
in the following  
pathetic elegy.

Alas I wepyng am constreined to bygygne vers of  
sorouful matere. ¶ þat whilom in florysching

4 of poetes enditen to me þinges to be writen. and drery  
vers of wrecchednes weten my face wiþ verrey teers.

¶ At þe leest no drede ne myzt[e] ouer-come þo muses.

7 þat þei ne weren felawes and folweden my wey. þat is  
to seyne when I was exiled. þei þat weren glorie of  
my youzth whilom weleful and grene conforten now þe

ypalage  
antithesis

sorouful werdes of me olde man. for elde is comen vn-  
warly vpon me hasted by þe harmes þat I haue. and

Laments his  
immature old  
age.

12 sorou haþ comaunded his age to be in me. ¶ Heeres  
hore ben schad ouertymelyche vpon myne heued. and  
þe slak[e] skyn trembleþ vpon myn emty body. þilk[e]

Death turns a  
deaf ear to the  
wretched.

deef of men is welful þat ne comeþ not in zeres þat  
ben swete (.i. mirie.) but comeþ to wrecches often

17 yclepid.

¶ Allas allas wiþ how deef an cere deef cruel  
tourneþ away fro wrecches and naieþ to closen wep-  
yng eyen. ¶ While fortune vnfeifful fauored[e] me

When Fortune  
was favourable  
Death came near  
Boethius,

wiþ lyzte goodes (.s. temporels.) þe sorouful heure þat

22 is to seyne þe deef had[de] almost dreynt myne heued.

but in his  
adversity life is  
unpleasantly  
protracted.

¶ But now for fortune clowdy haþ changed hir dis-  
ceyuable chere to me warde. myn vnpitouse lijf draweþ  
a long vnagreable dwellynges in me. ¶ O ze my

- 1 of—MS. of of.  
2 florysching—floryssynge  
3 rendyng—rendynge  
4 be—ben  
5 wrecchednes—wrecched-  
nesse  
teers—teeres  
6 leest—leeste  
myzt[e] ouer-come—myhte  
ouercomen  
8 seyne when—seyn when  
9 youzth—MS. þo3t, C. yowthe  
10 sorouful werdes—sorful  
wierdes [i. fata]  
12 sorou—sorwe

- 12 haþ—MS. haþe  
be—ben  
13 hore—hoore  
ben—arn  
myne—myn  
14 slak[e]—slake  
vpon—of  
emty—emptyd  
þilk[e]—þilke  
15 welful—welcful  
comeþ not—comth nat  
16 .i. mirie—omitted  
17 tourneþ—torneth  
naieþ—nayteth  
wepyng—wepyng

- 20 While—Whil  
fauored[e]—fauorede  
21 lyzte—lyhte  
.s. temporels—omitted  
sorouful heure—sorwful  
howre  
22 seyne—seyn  
had[de]—hadde  
myne—myn  
23 haþ—MS. haþe  
changed hir disceyu-  
able—chaungd hyre de-  
ceyuable  
24 vnpitouse lijf—vnpictous  
lyf

frendes what or wherto auainted[e] 3e me to be weleful : for he þat haþ fallen stood not in stedfast degree.

Why did his friends call him happy ? He stood not firm that hath thus fallen.

## HIC DUM MECUM TACITUS.

IN þe mene while þat I stille recorded[e] þise þinges wip my self. *and* markede my wepli compleynte wip

[The firste prose.]  
29

office of poyntel. I saw stondyng aboue þe heyzt of my heued a woman of ful greet reuerence by semblaunt

Philosophy appears to Boethius,

hir eyen brennyng *and* clere seing ouer þe comune myzt of men. wip a lijfly colour *and* wip swiche vigoure *and* strenkeþ þat it ne myzt[e] not be emptid. ¶ Al

like a beautiful woman,  
33

were it so þat sche was ful of so greet age. þat men ne wolde not trowe. in no manere þat sche were of oure

and of great age.  
36

elde. þe stature of hir was of a doutous iugement. for sumtyme sche constreyned[e] *and* schronk hir seluen lyche to þe comune mesure of men. *and* sumtyme it semed[e] þat sche touched[e] þe heuene wip þe heyzte

Her height could not be determined,  
40

of hir heued. and when sche hef hir heued heyer sche perced[e] þe selue heuene. so þat þe syzt of men loking was in ydel. ¶ Hir cloþes weren maked of ryzt delye predes *and* subtil crafte of perdurable matere. þe wyche

for there were times when she raised her head higher than the heavens.  
44

cloþes sche hadde wouen wip hir owen hondes : as I knew wel affir by hir selfe. declaryng *and* schewyng to me þe beaute. þe wiche cloþes a derkenes of a forleten and dispised elde had[de] duskid *and* dirkid as it is wont to dirken by-smoked ymages. ¶ In þe ne-

Her clothes were finely wrought and indissoluble,  
47

but dark and dusky, like old besmoked images.

26 *auainted[e]*—*auaintede*  
*be*—*ben*

27 *haþ*—MS. *haþo*  
*not*—*nat*

*stedfast*—*stidefast*

28 *In þe mene*—omitted

*recorded[e]*—*recordede*

30 *saw*—MS. *sawe*, C. *sawh*  
*stondyng aboue*, C. *stond-*  
*ing abouen*

*heyzt*—*heyhte*

*my*—*myn*

31 *greet*—*gret*

32 *brennyng*—*brennynge*

*clere seing*—*cleer seyng*

33 *swiche*—*swych*

34 *strenkeþ*—*strengthe*

*it* — *emptid* — *it myhte*

*nat ben emted*

34 *Al*—*alle*

36 *wolde*—*trowe*—*wolden*

*nat trowen*

37 *iugement*—*iuggement*

38 *sumtyme*—*somtyme*

*constreyned[e]* — *con-*

*streynede*

*schronk* — MS. *schronke*,

C. *shronk*

39 *lyche*—*lyk*

40 *semed[e]*—*semede*

*touched[e]*—*towchede*

41 *when*—*whan*

*hef*—MS. *heued*, C. *hef*

*heyer*—*hyere*

42 *perced[e]*—*percede*

*syzt*—*syhte*

*lokyng*—*lookyuge*

44 *crafte*—*craft*

45 *wouen*—MS. *wonnen*, C.

*wouen*

*owen hondes* — *owne*

*handes*

46 *knew*—MS. *knewe*, C.

*knewh*

*selfe declaryng* — *self de-*

*clarynge*

*schewyng*—*shewyng*

47 *derkenes*—*dirknesse*

*forleten*—*forletyn*

48 *dispised*—*despised*

*had[de] duskid* — *hadde*

*dusked*

*dirkid*—*derked*

49 *by-smoked*—*the smokede*

*neperest[e]*—*nethcrest*

On the lower hem  
of her garment  
was the letter Π  
and on the  
upper Θ.

perest[e] hem or bordure of þese cloþes men redder  
ywouen in swiche a gregkysche .P. þat signifiþ þe lijf  
actif. And abouen þat *lettre* in þe hey3est[e] bordure

53 a grekysche T. þat signifiþ þe lijf contemplatif.

Between the  
letters were  
steps like a  
ladder.

¶ And by-twene þese two *lettres* þere weren sciē de-  
grees nobly wrouzt in manere of laddres. By wyche

56 degrees men myzt[en] clymbe fro þe nepemast[e] *lettre*

Philosophy's  
garments were  
tattered and  
torn, and pieces  
had been carried  
violently off.

to þe ouermast[e]. ¶ Naþeles hondes of sum men  
hadde korue þat cloþe by vyolence and by strenkeþ.

¶ And eueryche man of hem hadde born away syche

60 peces as he myzte geet[e]. ¶ And forsoþe þis forsaide

In her right hand  
she bore her  
books, and in her  
left a sceptre.

woman ber bookes in hir ryzt honde. and in hir lefte  
honde sche ber a ceptre. ¶ And when sche sau3 þese

poetical muses aprochen aboute my bedde. and endyt-

64 yng wordes to my wepynges. sche was a lytel ameued

Philosophy bids  
the Muses leave  
Boethius,

and glowed[e] wiþ cruel eyen. ¶ Who quod sche haþ  
suffred aprochen to þis seek[e] man þise comune strum-

petis of siche a place þat \*men clepen þe theatre.

[\* fol. 4.]

68 ¶ þe wyche only ne asswagen not his sorowes. wiþ no

as they only  
increase his  
sorrow with their  
sweet venom.

remedies. but þei wolde fede and norysche hem wiþ  
swete venym. ¶ Forsoþe þise ben þo þat wiþ þornes

and prykkynge of talent3 or affeccions wiche þat

72 ben no þing frutefyng nor profitable destroyen þe

They may  
accustom the  
mind to bear  
grief, but cannot  
free it from its  
malady.

cornes plenteouse of frutes of reson. ¶ For þei  
holden þe hertes of men in usage. but þei ne delyuere

not folk fro maladye. but if 3e muses hadde wiþdrawen

50 þese—thise  
51 swiche—omitted  
gregkysche—grekysche  
signifiþ—syngnifieth  
52 hey3est[e]—heyeste  
54 by-twene þese—bytwixen  
thise  
þere—ther  
sciē—seyen  
55 nobly wrouzt—nobely y-  
wroght  
wyche—whiche  
56 myzt[en] clymbe—myhten  
clymbyn  
nepemast[e]—nethereste  
57 ouermast[e]—vppereste  
sum—some  
58 hadde korue—hadden  
koruen

58 cloþe—cloth  
strenkeþ—strengthe  
59 born—MS. borne, C. born  
away syche—away swiche  
60 geet[e]—geten  
forsaide—forseide  
61 ber—MS. bere, C. bar  
bookes—smale bookes  
honde—hand  
lefte honde—left hand  
62 ber—MS. bere, C. baar  
sau3 þese—say thise  
63 bedde—bed  
endytng—enditynge  
64 ameued—amoued  
65 glowed[e]—glowede  
hath—MS. hape, C. hath  
66 seek[e]—sike  
þise—the

66 strumpetis—strompetes  
67 siche—swich  
clepen—clepyn  
68 only ne—nat only ne  
not his—nat hise  
no—none  
69 wolde fede—wolden feeden  
norysche hem—norysyn  
lym  
72 ben—ne ben  
frutefyng—fructefyng  
73 cornes plenteouse—corn  
plentyuous  
74 þe and ne—both omitted  
75 not—nat  
if 3e—MS. if þe, C. yif ye  
hadde—hadden



fro me wiþ 3oure flateries. any vnkonnyng *and* vnprofit-  
able man as men ben wont to fynde comunely amonges  
þe peple. I wolde wene suffre þe lasse greuonsly.  
¶ For-why in syche an vnprofitable man myne ententes  
weren no þing endamaged. ¶ But 3e wiþdrawen me 80  
þis man þat hap ben norysched in studies or scoles of  
Eleaticis *and* of achademicis in grece. ¶ But goþ now  
raþer away 3e meremaydenes wyche ben swete til it  
be at þe laste. *and* suffreþ þis man to be cured *and* 84  
heled by myne muses. þat is to say by notful sciences.  
¶ And þus þis compaygnie of muses I-blamed casten  
wroþely þe chere adounward to þe erþe *and* schewyng 87  
by redenesse hir schame þei passeden sorowfully þe  
preschefolde. ¶ And I of whom þe syzt ploned in  
teres was derked so þat I ne myzt[e] not knowe what  
þat woman was of so imperial auctorite. ¶ I wex al 91  
a-besid *and* astoned. *and* caste my syzt adoune in to þe  
erþe. *and* bygan stille forto abide what sche wolde dor  
afterwarde. ¶ þo come sche nere *and* sette hir down  
vpon þe vterrest[e] corner of my bedde. *and* sche by- 95  
holdyng my chere þat was cast to þe erþe heuy *and*  
greuous of wepyng. compleinede wiþ þise wordes þat I  
schal sey þe perturbacioun of my þouzt. 98

Philosophy is  
deeply grieved,  
because they have  
not seduced one  
of the profane,

but one who has  
been brought up  
in Eleatic and  
Academic studies.

She bids the  
ayrens begone.

Blushing for  
shame they pass  
the threshold.

Boethius is  
astonished at the  
presence of the  
august dame.

Philosophy  
expresses her  
concern for  
Boethius.

## HEU QUAM PRECIPITI MERSA PROFUNDO.

Alas how þe þouzt of man dreint in ouer þrowyng [The 2de Metur.]  
depnesse dulleþ *and* forletip hys propre clere-  
nesse. myntyng to gone in to foreyne derknesses as  
ofte as hys anioius bisines wexip wiþ-ouen mesure.

Drowned in  
the depth of cares  
the mind loses  
its proper  
clearness.

76 *vnkonnyng*—vnkunnyng  
78 *peple*—poeple  
79 *syche*—swliche  
*myne*—myn  
80 *weren*—ne weeren  
*3e*—ye  
81 *hap*—MS. hape, C. hath  
*ben*—be  
*scoles*—schoolen  
82 *goþ*—MS. goþe, C. goth  
83 *wyche*—whiche þat  
85 *say*—seyen  
85 *notful*—noteful

86 *I-blamed*—Iblamyd  
87 *wroþely*—wrothly  
*adounward*—downward  
88 *redenesse*—rednesse  
*sorowfully*—sorwfully  
89 *preschefolde*—thresshfold  
*syzt*—syhte  
90 *derked*—dyrked  
*myzt[e]*—*knowe*—myhte  
*nat*—known  
91 *wex*—wax  
92 *a-besid*—abaysshed  
*caste*—cast

92 *adoune in to*—down to  
93 *don*—MS. done  
95 *vterrest[e] corner*—vt-  
tereste cornere  
*bedde*—bed  
97 *compleinede*—com-  
pleyn[e]  
98 *sey*—seyen  
101 *gone*—goon  
102 *bisines*—bysynesse  
*ouen*—owte



Man in his  
freedom knew  
each region of  
the sky,

the motions of  
the planets, and  
was wont to  
investigate the  
causes of storms,

the nature and  
properties of the  
seasons,

and the hidden  
causes of nature.

But now, alas,  
he is constrained  
to keep his face  
to the ground.

Philosophy  
addresses  
Boethius.

þat is dryuen to *and* fro wiþ worldly wyndes. ¶ þis  
man þat sumtyme was fre to whom þe heuene was open  
105 *and* knowen *and* was wont to gone in heuenelyche  
papes. *and* sau3 þe lyztnesse of þe rede sunne. *and* sau3  
þe sterres of þe colde moone. *and* wyche sterre in  
heuene vseþ wandryng risorses yflit by dyuerse speres.  
¶ þis man ouer comere hadde *comprehendid* al þis by  
noubre. of accountyng in astronomye. ¶ And ouer  
þis he was wont to seche þe causes whennes þe soun-  
112 yng wyndes moeuen *and* bisien þe smoþe water of þe  
see. *and* what spirit turneþ þe stable heuene. *and*  
whi þe sterre ryseþ oute of þe reede eest. to falle  
in þe westren wawes. and what attempriþ þe lusty  
houres of þe fyrste somer sesoun þat hizteþ *and* ap-  
117 paraileþ þe erþe wiþ rosene floures. ¶ And who  
makeþ þat plenteuouse autumpne in fulle 3eres fletip  
wiþ heuy grapes. ¶ And eke þis man was wont to  
telle þe dyuerses causes of nature þat weren yhid.  
121 ¶ Allas now lieþ he emptid of lyzt of hys þouzt. *and*  
hys nekke is *pressid* wiþ heuy cheynes *and* bereþ his  
chere enclined adoune for þe greet[e] weyzt. and is  
124 constreynd to loke on foule erþe.

SET MEDICINE INQUIT TEMPUS.

[The ij<sup>de</sup> prose.]

More need of  
mediaine than of  
complaint.

**B**vt tyme is now *quod* sche of medicine more þen of  
compleynte. ¶ Forsoþe þen sche entenyng to  
me warde wiþ al þe lokyng of hir eyen saide. ¶ Art  
128 not þou he *quod* sche þat sumtyme I-norschid wiþ my  
mylke *and* fostre[d] wiþ my meetes were ascaped *and*  
comen to corage of a perfit man. ¶ Certys I 3af þe

103 *worldly*—wordely  
104 *sumtyme*—whilom  
105 *gone*—goon  
106 *papes*—paathes  
*sau3*—sawh  
*lyztnesse*—lythnesse  
*sunne*—sonne  
*sau3*—MS. sue, C. sawgh  
107 *wyche*—which  
108 *risorses*—recourses  
111 *seche*—seken  
*sounyng*—sownyng

114 *ryseþ oute*—aryseth owt  
*falle*—fallen  
115 *westren*—westrene  
116 *fyrste*—fyrst  
119 *eke*—ek  
120 *dyuerses*—diuerse  
*yhid*—MS. yhidde  
121 *lieþ*—lith  
*emptid*—emted  
123 *adoune*—adown  
*greet[e] weyzt* — grete  
weyhte

124 *loke*—*foule*—looken on  
the fool  
125, 126 *þen*—than  
127 *al*—alle  
*saide*—seyde  
128 *sumtyme*—whilom  
*I-norschid* — MS. I-nor-  
schide, C. noryssed  
129 *fostre[d]*—fostered  
*my*—myne  
130 *Certys*—Certes  
3af, yaf.

syche armures þat 3if þou þi self ne haddest first caste  
hem away. þei schulden haue defendid þe in sykernesse 132  
þat may not be ouer-comen. ¶ Knowest þou me not.  
\* Why art þou stille. is it for schame or for astonynge. [° fol. 4 b.]  
It were me leuer þat it were for schame. but it semeþ  
me þat astonynge haþ oppressed þe. ¶ And whan  
sche say me not oonly stille. but wiþ-uten office of 137  
tonge *and* al doumbe. sche leide hir honde softely vpon  
my brest *and* seide. ¶ Here nis no peril *quod* sche.  
¶ He is fallen in to a litargie. whiche þat is a comune  
sekenes to hertes þat ben desceiued. ¶ He haþ a litel 141  
forzeten hym self. but certis he schal lyztly remembre  
hym self. ¶ 3if so be þat he haþ knowen me or now.  
*and* þat he may so done I wil wipe a litel hys eyen.  
þat ben derked by þe cloude of mortel þinges ¶ þise  
wordes seide sche. and wiþ þe lappe of hir garment 146  
yplitid in a frounce sche dried[e] myn eyen þat were  
ful of þe wawes of my wepynges. and dries up his  
tears.

TUNC ME DISCUSSA.

þus when þat nyzt was discussed *and* chased away. [The 3<sup>de</sup> Metarr.]  
derknesses forlesten me. *and* to myn eyen repeyre  
azeyne her firste strenkeþ. and ryzt by ensample as  
þe sonne is hid when þe sterres ben clustred. þat is to  
sey when sterres ben couered wiþ cloudes by a swifte  
wynde þat hyzt chorus. *and* þat þe firmament stont  
derked by wete ploungy cloudes. and þat þe sterres not  
apperen vpon heuene. ¶ So þat þe nyzt semeþ sprad 156  
vpon erþe. ¶ Yif þan þe wynde þat hyzt borias  
Her touch dispels  
the darkness of  
his soul,  
just as the heavy  
vapours, that  
darken the skies  
and obscure the  
sunlight, are  
chased away by  
the north wind,

131 *syche*—swiche  
3if—yif  
caste—C. cast  
132 *away*—away  
*schulden haue*—sholden  
han  
133 *not be*—nat ben  
*Knowest þou*—knowestow  
134 *art þou*—artow  
136 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
138 *tonge*—tunge  
*doumbe*—dowmb  
*honde*—hand

139 *Here*—her  
140 *litargie whiche*—litarge  
which  
141 *sekenes*—sykenesse  
141, 143 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
144 *done*—doon  
*wil wipe*—wol wypen  
146 *garment*—garnement  
147 *dried[e]*—dryede  
*were*—weeren  
148 *ful*—fulle  
149 *when*—whan  
150 *myn*—myne

150 *repeyre*—repeyrede  
151 *azeyne*—omitted  
*her firste*—hir fyrst  
152 *hid*—MS. hidde, C. hid  
*when*—whan  
153 *sey*—seyn  
*when*—whan  
154 *hyzt*—heyhte  
*chorus*—MS. thorus  
*stont*—MS. stonde, C. stant  
157 *þan*—þanne  
*wynde*—wynd  
*hyzt*—hyhte

158 sent out of þe kaues of þe contre of Trace betiþ pis  
causing the return  
of the hidden day,  
when the sun  
smites our won-  
dering sight with  
his sudden light.  
nyzt. þat is to seyn chasiþ it away *and* descouereþ þe  
closed day. ¶ þan schineþ phebus yshaken wiþ  
sodeyne lyzt *and* smyteþ wiþ hys bemes in meruelyng  
162 eyen.

1 MS. hanc.

HAUT<sup>1</sup> ALITER TRISTICIE.

[The 3<sup>d</sup>e prose.]  
The clouds of  
sorrow being dis-  
pelled, Boethius  
recollects the  
features of his  
Physician,

whom he dis-  
covers to be  
Philosophy.

Ryzt so *and* none oþer wyse þe cloudes of sorowe  
dissolued *and* don away. ¶ I took heuene. *and*  
receyuede mynde to knowe þe face of my fyciscien.  
¶ So þat I sette myne eyen on hir *and* festned[e] my  
lokyng. I byholde my norice philosophie. in whos  
houses I hadde conuersed *and* haunted fro my zouþe.

169 *and* I seide þus. ¶ O þou maistresse of alle uertues  
He addresses her. descendid fro þe souereyne sete. Whi art þou comen  
in to þis solitarie place of myn exil. ¶ Art þou comen

172 for þou art mad coupable wiþ me of fals[e] blames.  
She expresses her  
concern for him, ¶ O *quod* sche my norry scholde I forsake þe now. *and*  
scholde I not parte wiþ þe by comune trauaille þe charge  
þat þou hast suffred for envie of my name. ¶ Certis

176 it nar[e] not leueful ne sittying to philosophie to leten  
and tells him that  
she is willing to  
share his misfor-  
tunes.

wiþ-uten compaignie þe wey of hym þat is innocent.  
¶ Scholde I þan redoute my blame *and* agrisen as þouz

179 þer were byfallen a newe þing. q. d. non. ¶ For  
She fears not any  
accusation, as if  
it were a new  
thing.

trowest þou þat philosophi be now alþerfirst assailed  
in perils by folk of wicked[e] maneres. ¶ Haue I not

For before the age  
of Plato she con-  
tended against  
folly,

stryuen wiþ ful greet strife in olde tyme byfore þe  
age of my plato azeins þe foolhardines of foly *and*

and by her help  
Socrates tri-  
umphed over an  
unjust death.

184 eke þe same plato lyuyng. hys maistre socrates  
deserued[e] victorie of vnryztful deep in my presence.

¶ þe heritage of wyche socrates. þe heritage is to seyne

158 *sent*—isent  
160 *þan*—thanne  
161 *sodeyne*—sodeyn  
163 *none oþer*—non oother  
*sorowe*—sorwe  
165 *knowe*—knowen  
166 *myne*—myn  
*festned[e]*—fastnede  
170 *fro*—from  
170, 171 *art þou*—artow

172 *mad*—MS. made, C. mak-  
*fals[e]*—false [ed]  
174 *parte*—parten  
176 *nar[e]*—nere  
*sittying*—sittinge  
178 *þan*—thanne  
179 *þing*—thing  
*q. d. non*—omitted  
180 *trowest þou*—trowestow  
*alþerfirst*—alderfirst

181 *wicked[e]*—wikkede  
182 *strife*—strif  
183 *azeins*—ayenis  
*foolhardines*—foolhardi-  
nesse  
*foly*—folie  
184 *eke*—ek  
185 *deserued[e]*—desseruede  
186 *wyche*—the which  
*seyne*—seyyn



þe doctrine of þe whiche socrates in hys oppinioun of Of the inheritance  
 felicite þat I clepe welfulnesse ¶ Whan þat þe people of Epicureans  
 of epicuriens *and* stoyciens *and* many oþer enforceden and Stoics wanted  
 hem to go rauische eueryche man for his part þat is 190  
 to seyne. þat to eueryche of hem wolde drawn to þe Philosophy with-  
 defence of his oppinioun þe wordes of socrates. ¶ þei stood them,  
 as in *partie* of hir preye todrowen me crynge *and* whereupon they  
 debatyng þer azains. *and* tornen *and* torenten my cloþes tore her robe,  
 þat I hadde wouen wiþ myn handes. *and* wiþ þe and, departing  
 cloutes þat þei hadden arased oute of my cloþes. þei with the shreds,  
 wenten away wenyng þat I hadde gon wiþ hem euery 194  
 dele. In whiche epicuryens *and* stoyciens. for as imagined that  
 myche as þer semed[e] somme traces *and* steppes of Thus, clothed  
 myne habit. þe folye of men wenyng þo epicuryens with her spoils,  
*and* stoyciens my \*familers peruertede (.s. *persequendo*) they deceiued  
 somme þoruþ þe errour of þe wikked[e] or vnkunn- many.  
 yng[e] multitude of hem. ¶ þis is to seyne for þei [· fol. 5.]  
 semeden philosophres: þei weren pursued to þe deep Philosophy  
 and slayn. ¶ So yif þou hast not knowen þe exilynge adduces  
 of anaxogore. ne þe empoyseyng of socrates. ne þe examples of wise  
 tourmentþ of zeno for þei [weren] straungers. ¶ 3it men, who had  
 myztest þou haue knowen þe senectiens *and* þe Canyos laboured under  
*and* þe sorancis of wyche folk þe renoun is neyþer ouer 206  
 oolde ne vnsolempne. ¶ þe whiche men no þing ellys difficulties on  
 ne brouzt[e] hem to þe deep but oonly for þei weren account of being  
 enfourmed of my maneres. *and* semeden moste vnlyke her disciples.  
 to þe studies of wicked folk. ¶ And forþi þou auztest  
 not to wondre þouþ þat I in þe bitter see of þis lijf be 210  
 214

189 *welfulnesse* — weleful-  
 189 *oþer*—oother [nesse]  
 190 *go*—gon  
*eueryche*—euerich  
 191 *seyne*—seyn  
*to*—omitted  
*eueryche*—euerich  
 194 *tornen*—read coruen, C.  
 koruen  
 195 *wouen*—MS. *wonnen*, C.  
 wouen  
 196 *arased*—arraced  
 197 *gon*—MS. *gone*, C. *gon*  
 198 *dele*—del  
 199 *myche*—moche

199 *semed[e]*—semede  
*and*—or  
 200 *myne*—myn  
*wenyng*—MS. *weyng*, C.  
 weninge  
 202 *þoruþ*—thorw  
*wikked[e]*—wikkede  
*vnkunnynge*—vnkuun-  
 203 *seyne*—seyn þat [yng  
 204 *semeden*—semede  
*pursued*—MS. *pursuede*,  
 C. *pursued*  
 205 *slayn*—MS. *slayne*, C.  
 slayn  
 207 [*weren*]—weeren

208 *myztest þou haue*—  
 myhtestow han  
 209 *sorancis*—sorans  
*wyche*—which  
*is*—nis  
 210 *oolde*—MS. *colde*, C. *old*  
 211 *brouzt[e]*—browhte  
 212 *enfourmed*—MS. *vn*-  
 fourmed, C. *enformyd*  
*my*—myne  
*vnlyke*—vnlyk  
 213 *wicked folk*—wikkede  
*auztest*—owhtest [foolke]  
 214 *wondre*—wondren  
*bitter*—bittre

It is the aim of  
Philosophy to  
displease the  
wicked,

who are more to  
be despised than  
dreaded, for they  
have no leader.

If Philosophy is  
attacked by the  
wicked, she re-  
tires within her  
fortress,

leaving the enemy  
busy among the  
useless baggage,  
and laughing to  
scorn such hunt-  
ers of trifles.

[The ferthe  
Metur.]

He who hath  
triumphed over  
fate, and remained  
insensible to the

changes of For-  
tune, shall not be  
moved by storms,  
nor by the fires  
of Vesuvius,  
nor by the fiercest  
thunderbolts.

Fear not the  
tyrant's rage.

He who neither  
fears nor hopes

216 *displese*—displezen  
217 *wikked[e]*—wikkede  
*schreus*—shrewes  
218 *oost*—glossed *acies* in C.  
*grete*—gret  
219, 222 *leder*—ledere  
220 *flityng*—flectyng  
*lyzly*—lythly  
*yf*—yif  
221 *azeynest*—ayenis  
222 *to*—*rychesse*, to  
dere hise rycheses gy-  
*toure*—towr  
224 *hey3*—heye

fordryuen wip tempestes blowyng aboute. in þe whiche  
tempeste þis is my most purpos þat is to seyn to dis-  
217 plese to wikked[e] men. ¶ Of whiche schreus al be  
þe oost neuer so grete it is to dispysse. for it nis gouerned  
wip no leder of resounce. but it is rauysched only by  
220 flityng errorr folyly and lyztly. ¶ And if þei somtyme  
makyng an ost azeynest vs assaile vs as strengere. oure  
leder draweþ to gedir hys rychesse in to hys toure.  
and þei ben ententif aboute sarpulers or sachels vn-  
profitable forto taken. but we þat ben hey3 abouen syker  
225 fro al tumulte and wode noise. ben stored and enclosed  
in syche a palays. whider as þat chateryng or anoying  
folye ne may not attayne. ¶ We scorne swiche  
rauiners and honters of foulest[e] þinges.

QUISQUIS COMPOSITO.

Who so it be þat is clere of vertue sad and wel ordinat  
of lyuyng. þat haþ put vnderfote þe prowed[e]  
wierdes and lokip vpryzt vpon eyþer fortune. he may  
232 holde hys chiere vndiscomfited. ¶ þe rage ne þe manace  
of þe commoeuyng or chasyng vpwarde hete fro þe  
botme. ne schal not moeue þat man. ne þe vnstable  
mountaigne þat hyzt veseus. þat wircheþ oute þoru3  
236 hys broken[e] chemineys smokyng fires. ¶ Ne þe wey  
of þonder lyzt þat is wont to smyte hey3e toures ne  
schal not mouene þat man. ¶ Wherto þen wrecches  
drede 3e tyrauntes þat ben wode and felownes wip-outen  
ony strenkeþ. ¶ Hope after no þing ne drede nat. and

225 *al*—alle  
*ben*—omitted  
*stored*—warnestored  
226 *syche*—swich  
*þat*—omitted  
227 *scorne*—schorne  
228 *rauiners*—þinges—  
rauyneres & henteres of  
fowleste thinges  
229 *clere*—cleer  
230 *lyuyng*—leuyng  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
*vnderfote*—vndir-foot  
*prowed[e]*—prowde

231 *may*—*chiere*—may his  
cheere holde  
232 *manace*—manesses  
233 *þe*—þe see  
235 *hyzt*—hihte  
*veseus*—MS. vesenus  
*wircheþ*—writith  
236 *broken[e]*—brokene  
*smokyng*—smokyng  
237 *smyte*—smyten  
238 *Wherto þen*—wharto  
thane  
239 *felownes*—ony—felo-  
nous withowte any



so schalt þou desarmen þe ire of þilke vnmyzty tyraunt. for anything disarms the tyrant.  
¶ But who so þat quakyng dredeþ or desireþ þing þat He whose heart  
nis not stable of his ryzt. þat man þat so doþ haþ cast fails him, yields  
away hys schelde *and* is remoued fro hys place. *and* his arms,  
enlaceþ hym in þe cheyne wiþ whiche he may be 245  
drawen. own fetters.

## SENTIS NE INQUIT.

**F**elest þou *quod* sche þise þinges *and* entren þei ouzt [The verthe  
in þi corage. ¶ Art þou like an asse to þe harpe. Philosophy seeks  
Whi wepest þou whi spillest þou teres. ¶ Yif þou to know the  
abidest after helpe of þi leche. þe byhoueþ discouere þi malady of  
wounde. ¶ þo .I. þat hadde gadered strenkeþ in my Boethius,  
corage answered[e] *and* seide. *and* nedep it zitte *quod* Boethius com-  
.I. of rehersyng or of amonicioun. *and* scheweþ it not 250 plains of For-  
ynouþ by hym self þe scharpnes of fortune þat wexeþ tune's unrelenting  
woode aþeynes me. ¶ Ne moeueþ it nat þe to seen þe rage.  
face or þe manere of þis place (.i. prisoun.). ¶ Is þis Is not she moved,  
þe librarie wyche þat þou haddest chosen for a ryzt 257 he asks, with the  
certeyne sege to þe in myne house. ¶ þere as þou aspect of his  
desputest of[te] wiþ me of þe sciences of þinges touch- prison?  
ing diuinitee *and* touchyng mankynde. ¶ Was þan His library, his  
myn habit swiche as it is now. was þan my face or habit, and his  
desputest of[te] wiþ me of þe sciences of þinges touch- countenance are  
ing diuinitee *and* touchyng mankynde. ¶ Was þan all changed.  
myn habit swiche as it is now. was þan my face or 261  
my chere swiche as now. ¶ Whan I souzt[e] wiþ þe  
secretys of nature. whan þou enfourmedest my maners  
*and* þe resoun of al my lijf. to þe ensauple of þe ordre 264  
of heuene. ¶ Is nat þis þe gerdoun þat I referre to þe  
to whom I haue be obeisaunt. ¶ Certis þou enfour- Is this, he asks,  
medist by þe mouþe of plato þis sentence. þat is to the reward of his  
seyne þat *commune* þinges or comunabletes weren fidelity?  
Plato (de Rep. v.)  
says that those  
Commonwealths

241 *schalt þou desarmen*—  
shaltow deseruien  
243 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
*haþ*—MS. hape, C. hath  
*cast*—MS. caste, C. cast  
244 *schelde*—sheld  
*remoued fro*—remwed  
from  
245 *whiche*—the which  
*be*—ben  
247 *Felest þou*—Felistow  
*ouzt*—awht

248 *art þou*—artow  
249 *wepest þou*—wepistow  
*spillest þou*—spillestow  
252 *answered[e]*—auswer-  
ede  
255 *woode*—wood  
257 *wyche*—which  
258 *myne house þere*—myn  
hows ther  
259 *desputest of[te]*—des-  
putedest ofte  
260 *þan*—thane

261 *it and þan*—both omitted  
261, 262 *swiche*—swich  
262 *souzt[e]*—sowhte  
263 *secretys*—secretz  
*my*—MS. me, C. my  
264 *al*—alle  
265 *gerdoun*—gerdouns  
266 *enfoumedist*—conform-  
edest  
267 *mouþe*—mowht  
268 *comunabletes*—comuna-  
litees

are most happy  
that are governed  
by philosophers,  
or by those who  
study to be so.  
[\* fol. 5 b.]

blysfyl yif þei þat hadn studied al fully to wisdom  
gouerneden þilke þinges. or ellys yif it so by-felle þat  
þe gouernours \*of communalites studieden in grete wis-

272 domes. ¶ þou saidest eke by þe mouþe of þe same

The same Plato  
urged philoso-  
phers to take  
upon them the  
management of  
public affairs,

plato þat it was a necessarie cause wyse men to taken  
and desire þe gouernaunce of comune þinges. for þat þe  
gouernementes of comune citees y-left in þe hondes of

276 felonous *tourmentours* Citizenis ne scholde not brynge  
inne pestilence and destruccioun to goode folk. ¶ And

lest it should fall  
into the hands of  
unprincipled  
citizens.

þerfore I folowynge þilk auctoritee (.s. platonis). desiryng

279 to put[te] furþe in excusioun and in acte of comune

Boethius declares  
that he desired to  
put in practice  
(in the manage-  
ment of public  
affairs) what he  
had learnt in his  
retirement.

administracioun þo þinges þat .I. hadde lerned of þe  
among my secre restyng whiles. ¶ þou and god þat

put[te] þee in þe þouztis of wise folk ben knowen wiþ  
me þat no þing brouzt[e] me to maistrie or dignite: but

284 þe comune studie of al goodenes. ¶ And þer-of comeþ

He sought to do  
good to all, but  
became involved  
in discord with  
the wicked.

it þat by-twixen wikked folk and me han ben greuouse  
discordes. þat ne myzten not be releseþ by prayeres.

¶ For þis libertee haþ fredom of conscience þat þe wrapþe

288 of more myzty folk haþ alwey ben despised of me for

Consciousness of  
integrity made  
him despise the  
anger of the most  
powerful.

saluacioun of ryzt. ¶ How ofte haue .I. resisted and  
wiþstonde þilk man þat hyzt[e] conigaste þat made

alwey assautes azeins þe propre fortunes of poure feble

292 folke. ¶ How ofte haue .I. zitte put of. or cast out

He opposed  
Conigastus,  
and put a stop to  
the doings of  
Triguilla.

hym trigwille prouost of þe kynges hous boþe of þe  
wronges þat he hadde bygon[ne] to done and eke fully

performed. ¶ How ofte haue I couered and defended

296 by þe auctorite of me put azeins perils. þat is to seine put

He put his au-

myne auctorite in peril for þe wreched pore folke. þat

270 *by-felle*—byfille  
271 *in grete wisdomes*—to  
geten wysdom  
272 *eke*—ek  
275 *comune*—omitted  
*y-left*—MS. ylefte, C. yleft  
276 *Citizenis*—citesenes  
*brynge inne*—bryngen in  
278 *þerfore*—therfor  
*þilk*—thilke  
*desiryng*—desired  
279 *put[te] furþe*—putten

forth  
280 *þo*—thilke  
282 *put[te]*—putte  
283 *brouzt[e]*—ne browhte  
284 *þe*—omitted  
*al goodenes*—alle good-  
nesse  
*comeþ*—comth  
287, 288 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
289 *saluacioun*—sauacioun  
290 *þilk*—thilke  
*hyzt[e]*—hyhte

290 *conigaste*—MS. coniu-  
gaste  
292 *ofte*—ofte ek  
*zitte*—omitted  
294 *bygon[ne]*—bygunne  
*done*—don  
295 *couered*—MS. couerede,  
C. couered  
296 *put*—MS. putte, C. put  
*seine*—seyn  
297 *myne*—myn

- þe couetise of straungeres vnpunysched tourmentid alwey  
wip myseses *and* greuauces oute of noumbre. ¶ Neuer  
man drow me 3itte fro ryzt to wrong. When I say þe  
fortunes *and* þe rychesse of þe people of þe prouinces  
ben harmed eyþer by priue rauynes or by comune  
tributis or cariages. as sory was I as þei þat suffred[e]  
þe harme. *Glosa.* ¶ Whan þat theodoric þe kyng of  
gothes in a dere 3ere hadde hys gerneris ful of corne  
*and* comaundede þat no man ne schold[e] bie no corne  
til his corne were solde *and* þat at a dere greuous pris.  
¶ But I withstod þat ordinaunce *and* ouer-com it  
knowyng al þis þe kyng hym self. ¶ Coempcioun þat  
is to seyn comune achat or bying to-gidere þat were  
establißed vpon poeple by swiche a manere imposicioun  
as who so bouzt[e] a busshel corn he most[e] 3eue þe  
kyng þe fifte part. *Textus.* ¶ Whan it was in þe  
sourre hungry tyme þere was establißed or cried greuous  
*and* inplitable coempcioun þat men seyn wel it schulde  
greetly tourmentyn *and* endamagen al þe prouince of  
compaigne I took strif azeins þe prouost of þe pretorie  
for comune profit. ¶ And þe kyng knowyng of it I  
ouercom it so þat þe coempcioun ne was not axed ne  
took effect. ¶ Paulyn a counseiller of Rome þe rychesse  
of þe whyche paulyn þe houndys of þe palays. þat is to  
seyn þe officeres wolde han deuoured by hope *and*  
couetise. ¶ 3it drow I hym out of þe Iowes .s. faucibus  
of hem þat gapeden. ¶ And for as myche as þe peyne  
of þe accusacioun aiuged byforn ne scholde not sodeynly  
henten ne punischen wrongfully Albyn a counseiller of

thority in peril  
for the defence of  
poor folk.

I never deviated,  
he says, from the  
path of justice.

302

I felt for those  
that were wrong-  
fully oppressed.

306

310

313

I opposed success-  
fully Coemption  
in Campania.

316

I saved Paulinus  
out of the hands  
of the hounds of  
the palace  
(*Palatini canes*).

321

324

I defended  
Albinus against  
Cyprian.

298 *vnpunysched*—vnpunys-  
sed  
299 *myseses*—myseyses  
300 *drow*—MS. drowe, C.  
weth drowh  
3itte—yit  
wrong—wronge  
301 *rychesse*—richesses  
þe (2)—omitted  
302 *harmed eyþer*—harmyd  
or amenused othwer  
303 *tributis*—tributz  
*suffred[e]*—suffreden

304 *harme*—harm  
305 *3ere*—yer  
305 *hys*—hise  
305, 306, 307 *corne*—corn  
306 *schold[e]* *bie*—sholde  
byen  
308 *But I withstod*—Boece  
withstood (MS. with-  
stode)  
com—MS. come, C. com  
311 *swiche*—swich  
312 *bouzt[e]*—bowhte  
*busshel*—bossel

312 *most[e]* *3eue*—moste yeue  
315 *inplitable*—vnplitable  
*seyn*—sayen  
319 *ouercom*—MS. ouer-  
come, C. ouer com  
320 *counseiller*—consoler  
*rychesse*—rychesses  
321 *whyche*—which  
322 *wolde*—wolden  
323 *drow*—MS. drowe, C.  
drowh  
324 *myche*—moche  
326 *punischen*—punisse



- Rome. I put[te] me azenis þe hates *and* indignaciouns  
 328 of þe accusour Ciprian. ¶ Is it not þan ynought yseyn  
 þat I haue purchased greet[e] discordes azeins my self.  
 but I aughte be more assured azenis alle oþer folk þat  
 for þe loue of ryztwisnesse .I. ne reserued[e] neuer no  
 332 þing to my self to hem ward of þe kynges halle .s. officers.  
 by þe whiche I were þe more syker. ¶ But þoruþ þe  
 same accusours accusyng I am condempned. ¶ Of  
 þe noubre of whiche accusours one basilus þat som-  
 tyme was chased out of þe kynges seruce. is now com-  
 337 pelled in accusyng of my name for nede of foreine  
 moneye. ¶ Also opilion *and* Gaudencius han accused  
 me. al be it so þat þe Iustice regal hadde sumtyme demed  
 340 hem hoþe to go in to exil. for her treccheries *and* fraudes  
 wiþ-uten noubre. ¶ To whiche iugement þei wolde  
 not obeye. but defended[e] hem by sykernesse of holy  
 houses. \*þat is to seyne fledden in to seyntuaries. *and*  
 whan þis was aperceiued to þe kyng. he comaunded[e]  
 but þat þei voided[e] þe citee of Rauenne by certeyne  
 day assigned þat men scholde merken hem on þe for-  
 347 heued wiþ an hoke of iren *and* chasen hem out of toun.  
 ¶ Now what þing semeþ þe myzt[e] be lykned to þis  
 cruelte. For certys þilk same day was receyued þe ac-  
 cusyng of my name by þilk[e] same accusours. ¶ What  
 may be seid herto. haþ my studie *and* my konnyng  
 352 deserued þus. or ellys þe forseide dampnacioun of me.  
 made þat hem ryztful accusours or no (q.d. non).  
 ¶ Was not fortune asshamed of þis. [Certes alle hadde  
 nat fortune ben asshamyd] þat innocence was accused.  
 zit auzt[e] sche haue had schame of þe filþe of myn ac-

For the love of  
justice I forfeited  
all favour at  
Court.

Boethius makes  
mention of his  
accusers, Basilus,  
Opilio, Gauden-  
tius,

[\* fol. 6.]

men who had  
been commanded  
to leave the city  
on account of  
their many  
crimes.

But, on the day  
this sentence was  
to be executed,  
they accused him,  
and their testi-  
mony against  
him was accepted.

Fortune, if not  
ashamed at this,  
might at least  
blush for the  
baseness of the  
accusers.

327 put[te]—putte  
 328 yseyn—MS. yseyne  
 329 greet[e]—grete  
 330 aughte be—owhte be the  
 oþer—oothre  
 333 by þe whiche—by which  
 þoruþ þe—thorw tho  
 335 whiche—the whiche  
 one—oon  
 somtyme—whilom  
 339 sumtyme—whilom  
 340 go—ron  
 her—hir

341 wiþ-uten—withowte  
 wolde not—nolden nat  
 342 defended[e]—defendydyn  
 by—by the  
 343 seyne—seyne  
 seyntuaries—sentyuare  
 344 was—omitted  
 comaunded[e]—comaun-  
 dede  
 345 voided[e]—voidede  
 certeyne—certeyn  
 346 men—me  
 merken—marke

347 hoke of iren—hoot yren  
 348 þe—omitted  
 myzt[e] be—myhte ben  
 349 þilk—þilke  
 350 þilk[e]—þilke  
 351 be—ben  
 seid—MS. seide, C. seyð  
 haþ—MS. habe  
 354, 355 [Certes—*assha-*  
 myd]—from C.  
 356 auzt[e]—owte  
 haue had—han had, MS.  
 hadde

couours. ¶ But axest þou in somme of what gilt .I. 357

am accused. men seyne þat I wolde sauē þe compaignie of þe senatours. ¶ And desirest þou to here in what manere .I. am accused þat I scholde han disturbed þe accusour to beren lettres. by whiche he scholde han maked þe senatours guilty azeins þe kynges Real maieste. ¶ O meistresse what demest þou of þis. schal .I. forsake þis blame þat I ne be no schame to þe (q. d. non). ¶ Certis .I. haue wold it. þat is to seyne þe sauuacioun of þe senat. ne I schal neuer leten to wilne it. and þat I confesse and am a-knowe. but þe entent of þe accusour to be destourbed schal cese. ¶ For schal I clepe it a felonie þan or a synne þat I haue desired þe sauuacioun of þe ordre of þe senat. and certys 3it hadde þilk same senat don by me þoru3 her decretz and hire iugementys as þou3 it were a synne or a felonie þat is to seyne to wilne þe sauuacioun of hem (.s. senatus). ¶ But folye þat lieth alwey to hym self may not change þe merit of þinges. ¶ Ne .I. trowe not by þe iugement of socrates þat it were leueful to me to hide þe soþe. ne assent[e] to lesynges. ¶ But certys how so euer it be of þis I put[te] it to gessen or preisen to þe iugement of þe and of wise folk. ¶ Of whiche þing al þe ordinaunce and þe soþe for as moche as folk þat ben to comen aftir oure dayes schollen knowen it. ¶ I haue put it in scripture and remembraunce. for touching þe lettres falsly maked. by whiche lettres I am accused to han hooped þe fredom of Rome. What apperteneþ me to speken þer-of. Of whiche lettres þe fraude hadde ben schewed apertly if

Boethius says he is accused of trying to save the Senate, and of having embarrassed an informer against the Senate.

362

365

It is true that he tried to save the Senate, for he has and will have its best interests always at heart.

369

373

(Folly cannot change the merit of things.)

376

380

Boethius determines to transmit an account of his prosecution to posterity.

385

357 axest þou—axestow

358 seyne—seyne  
sauē—saue

359 desirest þou—desires  
thow

here—hereen  
362 maked—MS. maken, C.  
makyd

363 demest þou—demestow

365 wold—MS. wolde, C.

wold

366 seyne—seyne

367 þat—omitted

am—I am

368 þe—ben

369 it—it thanne

þan—omitted

371 þilk—þilke

372 her—hir

hire—hir

372 þou3—thogh

373 or—and

seyne—seyne

374 lieth—MS. lieþe, C. lieth

377 assent[e]—assente

381 schollen—shellen

382 and—and in

385 spoken—speke

of—lettres—C. omits

386 if—yif



Boethius says that he could have defeated his accusers had he been allowed the use of their confessions.

I hadde had libertee forto han vsed *and* ben at þe confessioun of myn accusours. ¶ Þe whiche þing in alle nedys haþ grete strenkeþ. ¶ For what oþer fredom may men hopen. Certys I wolde þat some oþer fredom

391 myzt[e] be hoped. ¶ I wolde þan haue answered by þe wordes of a man þat hyzt[e] Canius. for whan he was accused by Gayus Cesar Germeins son þat he (*canius*) was knowyng *and* consentyng of a coniuracioun maked azeins hym (.s. Gaius). ¶ Þis Canius answered[e]

But there is now no remains of liberty to be hoped for.

396 þus. ¶ Yif I had[de] wist it þou haddest not wist it. In whiche þing sorwe haþ not so dilled my witte þat I pleyne oonly þat schrewed[e] folk apparailen folies azeins vertues. ¶ But I wondre gretly how þat

It is not strange that the wicked should conspire against virtue.

400 þei may performe þinges þat þei had[de] hoped forto done. For why. to wylne schrewednesse þat comeþ paraenture of oure defaute. ¶ But it is lyke to a monstre *and* a meruaille. ¶ How þat in þe present

The will to do ill proceeds from the defects of human nature.

404 syzt of god may ben acheued *and* performed swiche þinges. as euery felonous man haþ conceyued in hys þouzt azeins innocent. ¶ For whiche þing oon of þi familers not vnskilfully axed þus. ¶ 3if god is. whennes comen wikked[e] þinges. *and* yif godne is whennes

It is a marvel how such evil acts can be done under the eye of an Omniscient God.

409 comen goode þinges. but al hadde it ben leueful þat felonous folk þat now desiren þe bloode *and* þe deef of alle goode men. *and* eke of al þe senat han wilned to gone destroien me. whom þei han seyn alwey batailen

If there be a God, whence proceeds evil? If there is none, whence arises good?

413 *and* defenden goode men *and* eke al þe senat. 3it hadde I not desserued of þe fadres. þat is to seyne of þe senatours þat þei scholde wilne my destruccioun.

387 *had*—MS. hade, C. had  
388 *myn*—myne  
389 *haþ*—MS. haþe, C. hath  
*grete*—gret  
*what*—omitted  
390 *some*—som  
391 *myzt[e]* *be*—myhte ben  
*þan haue*—þanne han  
392 *hyzt[e]*—hyhte  
394 *maked*—ymaked  
395 *answered[e]*—answeredre  
396 *had[de]*—hadde

397 *whiche*—which  
*sorwe*—sow  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
*witte*—wit  
398 *schrewed[e]*—shrewede  
399 *folies*—felonies  
*vertues*—vertu  
400 *had[de]*—han  
401 *done*—don  
*comeþ*—comth  
402 *lyke to a*—lyk a  
404 *syzt*—syhte

405 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
406 *innocent*—innocent3  
*whiche*—which  
408 *wikked[e]*—wykkede  
410 *bloode*—blod  
411 *eke*—ek  
412 *gone*—gon *and*  
*seyn*—seyen  
413 *eke*—ek  
414 *seyne*—seyen  
415 *scholde*—sholden

¶ þou remembrest wele as I gesse þat whan I wolde don or \*seyn any þing. þou þi self alwey present reweledest me. ¶ At þe citee of verone whan þat þe kyng gredy of comune slauzter. caste hym to transporten vpon al þe ordre of þe senat. þe gilt of his real maieste of þe whiche gilt þat albyn was accused. wiþ how grete sykernesse of peril to me defended[e] I al þe senat. ¶ þou wost wel þat I seide soþe. ne I auainted[e] me neuer in preysyng of my self. ¶ For alwey when any wyzt resceiueþ precieuse renoun in auautyng hym self of hys werkes: he amenusiþ þe secre of hys conscience. ¶ But now þou mayst wel seen to what ende I am comen for myne innocence. I receiue peyne of fals felonie in gerdoun of verray vertue. ¶ And what open confessioun of felonie had[de] euer iugis so accordaunt in cruelte. þat is to seyne as myne accusyng haþ. ¶ þat oþer errour of mans witte or ellyscondicioun of fortune þat is vncerteine to al mortal folk ne submytted[e] summe of hem. þat is to seyne þat it re cheyned[e] summe iuge to han pitee or compassioun. ¶ For al þou3 I had[de] ben accused þat I wolde brenne holy houses. and strangle prestys wiþ wicked swerde. ¶ or þat .I. had[de] grayped deef to alle goode men algatis þe sentence scholde han punysched me present confessed or conuict. ¶ But now I am remewed fro þe Citee of rome almost fyue-hundreþ þousand pas. I am wiþ outen defence dampned to proscricioun and to þe deef. for þe studie and bountees þat I haue done to þe senat. ¶ But o wel ben þei worþi of mercye (as who seiþ nay.) þer myzt[e] neuer

Boethius defends the integrity of his life.  
[\* fol. 6 b.]  
He defended the Senate at Verona.

420

422

He spake only the truth, and did not boast.

(Boasting lessens the pleasure of a self approving conscience.)

427

But as the reward of his innocence he is made to suffer the punishment due to the blackest crime.

432

435

Had he been accused of a design to burn temples, massacre priests, he would have been allowed to confront his accusers.

440

But now this is denied him, and he is proscribed and condemned to death.

444

416 *wel*—wel  
417 *don*—MS. done, C. doon  
*seyn*—seyen  
418 *þe* (1)—omitted  
419 *slauzter*—slawhtre  
420 *transporten vpon* —  
transport vp  
422 *grete*—gret  
*defended[e]*—deffendede  
423 *seide soþe*—seye soth  
424 *auainted[e]*—auaintede

425 *when*—whan  
*precieuse*—presious  
429 *in*—for  
430 *vertue*—vertu  
431 *had[de]*—hadde  
432 *seyne*—seyn  
*myne*—myn  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
433 *witte*—wit  
*uncerteine*—vncerteyn  
434 *al*—alle

434 *submytted[e]*—submit-  
435 *seyne*—seyn [tede  
*cheyned[e]*—enclinede  
436 *had[de]*—hadde  
438 *wicked*—wykkede  
*had[de]*—hadde  
441 *almost*—almest  
442 *þousand*—MS. þousas  
*wiþ outen*—withowte  
444 *done*—doon  
445 *myzt[e]*—myhte

- 446 *zit non of hem ben conuicte. Of swiche a blame as*  
*myn is of swiche trespas myn accusours seyen ful wel*  
*þe dignitee. þe wiche dignite for þei wolde derken it*  
*wiþ medelyng of some felonye. þei beren me on honde*  
 450 *and lieden. þat I hadde polute and defouled my con-*  
*science wiþ sacrelege. for couetise of dignite. ¶ And*  
*certys þou þi self þat art plaunted in me chacedest oute*  
*þe sege of my corage al couetise of mortal þinges. ne*  
 454 *sacrilege ne had[de] no leue to han a place in me byforne*  
*þine eyen. ¶ For þou drouppedest euery day in myn*  
*eeres and in my þouzt þilk comaundement of pictogoras.*  
*þat is to seyne men schal seruen to god. and not to*  
 458 *goddes. ¶ Ne it was no couenaunt ne no nede to*  
*taken helpe of þe foulest spirites. ¶ I þat þou hast*  
*ordeyned or set in syche excellence þat [þou] makedest*  
 461 *me lyke to god. and ouer þis þe ryzt clene secre*  
*chaumbre of myn house. þat is to seye my wiþ and þe*  
*compaignie of myn honeste frendis. and my wyues*  
*fadir as wel holy as worþi to ben reuerenced þoruþ*  
 465 *hys owen dedis. defenden me of al suspeccioun of syche*  
*blame. ¶ But o malice. ¶ For þei þat accusen me*  
*taken of þe philosophie feipe of so grete blame. ¶ For*  
*þei trowen þat .I. haue had affinite to malyfice or en-*  
*chauntementz by cause þat I am replenished and ful-*  
 470 *filled wiþ þi techynges. and enformed of þi maners.*  
*¶ And þus it sufficeþ not only þat þi reuerence ne auayle*  
*me not. but 3if þat þou of þi fre wille raper be blemished*  
*wiþ myne offensioun. ¶ But certys to þe harmes þat I*  
 474 *haue þere bytydeþ zit þis encrece of harme. þat þe*

Boethius says  
that his enemies  
accused him of  
sorcery.

He affirms that  
he has always  
followed the  
golden maxim of  
Pythagoras,—  
επου Οεπ.

His family and  
friends could clear  
him from all sus-  
picion of the  
crime of sorcery.

Because he has  
given himself up  
to Philosophy,  
his enemies accuse  
him of using un-  
lawful arts.

446 *ben*—be  
*swiche*—swich  
 447 *myn (both)*—myne  
*swiche*—whiche  
*seyen*—sayen  
 448 *wolde*—wolden  
 449 *some*—som  
*beren*—baren  
*on honde*—an hand  
 450 *polute*—polut  
 451 *sacrelege*—C. has sor-  
 cerie as a gloss to sacri-  
 lege  
 453 *al*—alle

454 *had[de]*—hadde  
*byforne*—byforn  
 455 *drouppedest*—dropped-  
 est  
*myn*—myne  
 456 *þilk*—þilke  
 457 *seyne*—scyn  
*seruen*—serue  
*god*—godde  
 459 *helpe*—help  
*spirites*—spirite  
 460 *set*—MS. sette, C. set  
*syche*—swiche  
 [þou]—thow

461 *lyke*—lyk  
 462 *house*—hows  
*seye*—scyn  
 463 *myn*—my  
 465 *owen*—owne  
*of al*—from alle  
*syche*—swich  
 467 *philosophie*—philosophre  
*feipe*—feyth  
*grete*—gret  
 468 *had*—MS. hadde, C. had  
 473 *myne*—myn  
 474 *þere*—ther  
*narne*—harm



gessinge *and* þe iugement of myche folk ne loken no 475  
 þing to þe[de]sertys of þinges but only to þe auenture  
 of fortune. ¶ And iugen þat only swiche þinges ben Most people  
 purueied of god. whiche þat temporel welefulnesse imagine that that  
 commendip. *Glosa.* ¶ As þus þat yif a wyzt haue only should be  
 prosperite. he is a good man *and* worþi. to haue þat 480 undertaken with  
 prosperite. and who so haþ aduersite he is a wikked prudent foresight  
 man. *and* god haþ forsake hym. *and* he is worþi to whiche is crowned  
 haue þat aduersite. ¶ þis is þe opinioun of somme with success.  
 folke. \**and* þer of comeþ þat good gessyng. ¶ Fyrste of  
 al þing forsakeþ wrecches certys it greueþ me to þink[e] 485  
 ryzt now þe dyuerse sentences þat þe poeple seiþ of  
 me. ¶ And þus moche I seye þat þe laste charge of 487  
 contrarious fortune is þis. † þat whan þat ony blame is [† fol. 7.]  
 laid vpon a caytif. men wenen þat he haþ deserued þat  
 he suffreþ. ¶ And I þat am put away from goode men Boethius laments  
*and* despoiled from dignitees *and* defoulid of my name the loss of his  
 by gessyng haue suffred torment for my goode dedis. 492 dignities and  
 ¶ Certys me semeþ þat I se þe felonus couines of reputation.  
 wikked men abounden in ioie *and* in gladnes. ¶ And The wicked, he  
 I se þat euery lorel shapiþ hym to fynde oute newe says, sin with  
 fraudes forto accusen goode folke. and I se þat goode 496 impunity,  
 men ben ouerþrowen for drede of my peril. ¶ and  
 euery luxurious *tourmentour* dar don alle felonie vn-  
 punished *and* ben excited þerto by ziftes. and innocent; 499  
 ne ben not oonly despoiled of sykernesse but of de- while the inno-  
 fence *and* þefore me list to crien to god in þis manere. cent are deprived  
 of security, protection, and  
 defence.

## O STELLIFERI CONDITOR ORBIS.

O þou maker of þe whele þat bereþ þe sterres. whiche [The fifthe metur.]  
 þat art fastned to þi perdurable chayere. *and* Author of the  
 starry sky, Thou,

475 *myche*—moche  
 476 þe[de]sertys—the desert; 3  
 479 *Glosa*—glose  
 480 *good*—MS. goode, C.  
 good  
*haue*—han  
 481 *so*—omitted in C.  
 481, 482 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
 483 *haue*—han

484 *Fyrste*—fyrst  
 485 *al*—alle  
 þink[e]—thiuke  
 488 *ony*—any  
 489 *laid*—MS. laide, C. leyd  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
 490 *put*—MS. putte, C. put  
 491 *from*—of  
 494 *abounden*—habownden

494 *gladnes*—gladnesse  
 495 *oute*—owt  
 496 *accusen*—accuse  
 497 *ben*—beth  
 501 *manere*—wise  
 502 *whele*—whel  
 whiche—whiche  
 503 *fastned*—yfastned  
 chayere—chayer



seated on high,  
turnest the  
spheres, and  
impose laws  
upon the stars  
and planets.

turnest þe heuene wiþ a rauyssyng sweighe *and* con-  
streinest þe sterres to suffren þi lawe. ¶ So þat þe  
mone somtyme schyning wiþ hir ful hornes metyng

507 wiþ alle þe bemes of þe sonne. ¶ Hir broþer hideþ þe

The sun obscures  
the lesser lights,  
and quenches  
even the moon's  
light.

sterres þat ben lasse. *and* somtyme whan þe mone  
pale wiþ hir derke hornes approcheþ þe sonne. leesith  
hir lyztes. ¶ And þat þe cuesterre esperus whiche

511 þat in þe first[e] tyme of þe nyzt bryngeþ furþe hir

Thou raisest  
Hesperus to usher  
in the shades of  
night, and again  
causest him to be  
the harbinger of  
day, whence his  
name Lucifer.

colde arysynges comeþ eft azeynes hir vsed cours. *and*  
is pale by þe morwe at þe rysyng of þe sonne. and is  
þan cleped lucifer. ¶ þou restrainest þe day by shorter  
dwelling in þe tyme of colde wynter þat makeþ þe

516 leues to falle. ¶ þou diuidest þe swifte tides of þe

Thou controllest  
the changing  
seasons of the  
year.

nyzt when þe hote somer is comen. ¶ þi myzt at-  
tempre[þ] þo variauntz sesons of þe zere. so þat  
zephyrus þe deboneire wynde bringeþ azein in þe first[e]

520 somer sesoun þe leues þat þe wynde þat hyzt[e] boreas  
haþ reft away in autumpne. þat is to seyne in þe laste

523 turus saw ben waxen hey[e] cornes whan þe sterre  
sirius eschaufþ hym. ¶ þere nis no þing vnbounde  
from hys olde lawe ne foreleteþ hym of hys propre estat.

All nature is  
bound by thy  
eternal law.

526 ¶ O þou *gouvernour* gouernyng alle þinges by certeyne

Why, then, leavest  
thou man's ac-  
tions uncon-  
trolled?

ende. why refusest þou oonly to gouerne þe werkes of  
men by dewe manere. ¶ Whi suffrest þou þat slid-

Why should  
fickle fortune be  
allowed to work  
such mighty  
changes in the  
world?

ying fortune turneþ to grete vtter chaungynges of þinges.  
so þat anioius peyne þat scholde duelly punisshe fel-  
ouns punissitz innocentz. ¶ And folk of wikked[e]

532 maneres sitten in heize chaiers. *and* anoienge folk

504 *sweighe*—sweyh  
*constreinest*, MS. con-  
treinest, C. constreynest  
506 *hir*—here  
508 *lasse*—lesse  
510 *esperus whiche*—hes-  
perus which  
511 *first[e]*—fyrste  
*furþe*—forth  
512 *eft*—est  
514 *restrainest*—MS. re-  
streinest  
516 *to*—omitted  
518 *attempre[þ]* þo—atemp-

reth the  
518 *sesons*—sesoun  
*zere*—yer  
519 *wynde bringeþ*—wynd  
brengeth  
520 *wynde*—wynd  
*hyzt[e]*—hihte  
521 *reft*—MS. refte, C. reft  
*seyne*—seyn  
522 *hyzt*—hihte  
*arcturus*—MS. ariturus  
523 *saw*—MS. saweþ, C.  
sawgh  
*hey[e]*—hyye

524 *hym*—hem  
*þere*—ther  
*þing*—thinge  
525 *from*—fram  
*foreleteþ hym of*—foreleet-  
heth þe werke of  
527 *refusest þou*—refows-  
estow  
529 *to*—þinges—so grete  
entrenchangynges of  
thynges  
531 *punissitz*—punysshe  
*wikked[e]*—wykkede  
532 *heize*—heere

treden *and* þat vnryztfully in þe nekkes of holy men. 533

¶ And vertue clere *and* schynyng naturely is hid in dirke dirkenesses. *and* þe ryztful man berip þe blame *and* þe peyne of þe felowne. ¶ Ne þe forsweryng ne

The wicked are prosperous, while the righteous are in adversity.

536

þe fraude couered *and* kembd wip a fals colour ne a-noyep not to schrewes. ¶ þe whiche schrewes whan hem lyst to vsen her strengþe þei reioisen hem to putten vndir hem þe souerayne kynges. whiche þat

540

poepel wip[outen] noumbre dreden. ¶ O þou what so euer þou be þat knyttes[t] alle bondes of þinges loke on þise wrecched[e] erþes. we men þat ben nat a foule party but a faire party of so grete a werke we

O thou that bindest the disagreeing elements, look upon this wretched earth,

544

ben turmentid in þe see of fortune. ¶ þou gouernour wipdraw *and* restreyne þe rauyssinge flodes *and* fastne *and* forme þise erþes stable wip pilke [bonde] wip whiche þou gouernest þe heuene þat is so large.

and, as thou dost govern the spacious heavens, so let the earth be firmly bound.

HIC UBI CONTINUATO DOLORE.

Whan I hadde wip a continuel sorwe sobbed or broken out þise þinges sche wip hir chere peisible *and* no þing amoeued. wip my compleyntes seide þus.

[The fyfthe prose.] Philosophy consoles Boethius.

551

whan I say þe quod sche sorweful *and* wepyng I wist[e] on-one þat þou were a wrecche *and* exiled. but I wist[e] neuer how fer þine exile was : zif þi tale ne hadde schewed it to me. but certys al be þou fer fro þi

555

contre. þou nart \* nat put out of it. but þou hast fayled of þi weye *and* gon amys. ¶ *and* yif þou hast

[\* fol. 7b.]

leuer forto wene þan þou be put out of þi contre. þan hast þou put oute þi self rapen þen ony oþer wyzt hap.

She speaks to him of his country.

¶ For no wyzt but þi self ne myzt[e] neuer haue don 560

533 in—oon  
534 *and*—omitted  
536 Ne þe forsweryng—Ne forswerynge  
537 kembd—MS. kembde, C. kembd  
541 wip[outen]—withowtyn  
542 knyttes[~~e~~]<sup>t</sup>—knytttest  
543 wrecched[e]<sup>e</sup>—wrecchede  
544 a (2)—omitted

545 þe—this  
546 wipdraw — MS. wipdrawe, C. withdrawh  
þe—thei  
547 forme—ferme [bonde]—from C.  
wip—by  
550 broken—borken  
552 wist[e]—wyste  
553 on-one—anon  
554 wist[e]—wyste

554 fer—ferre  
555 ne hadde—nadde  
557 gon—MS. gone, C. gon  
558 leuer—leuere  
558, 559 put—MS. putte, C. put  
559 hap—MS. hape  
560 myzt[e]—myhte  
haue—han  
don—MS. done, C. don

- 561 þat to þe. ¶ For 3if þou remembre of what contre þou  
 She reminds him  
 that he is a citi-  
 zen of a country  
 not governed by a  
 giddy multitude,  
 but *εις κοιναν*  
*εστιν, εις*  
*βασιλευς.*  
 art born. it nis not gouerned by emperoures. ne by  
 gouvernement of multitude. as weren þe contres of hem  
 of athenes. ¶ But o lorde *and* o kyng *and* þat is god  
 þat is lorde of þi contree. whiche þat reioiseþ hym of  
 566 þe dwellyng of hys Citezenis. *and* not forto putte hem  
 in exile. Of þe whiche lorde it is a souerayne fredom  
 to be gouerned by þe bridel of hym and obeie to his  
 iustice. ¶ Hast þou forzeten þilke ryzt olde lawe of þi  
 570 Citee. in þe whiche Citee it is ordeyned *and* establissed  
 þat what wyzt þat hap leuer founden þer inne hys sete  
 or hys house. þen ellys where : he may not be exiled  
 573 by no ryzt fro þat place. ¶ For who so þat is contened  
 in-wiþ þe paleis [*and* the clos] of þilke Citee. þer nis  
 no drede þat he may deserue to ben exiled. ¶ But  
 who þat letteþ þe wille forto enhabit[e] þere. he for-  
 577 leteþ also to deserue to ben Citezein of þilke Citee.  
 ¶ So þat I seye þat þe face of þis place ne amoeneþ me  
 Philosophy says  
 she is moved  
 more by the looks  
 of Boethius than  
 by his gloomy  
 prison.  
 nat so myche as þine owen face. Ne .I. ne axe not  
 raþer þe walles of þi librarie apparilled *and* wrouzt  
 wiþ yvory *and* wiþ glas þan after þe sete of þi þouzt.  
 582 In whiche I putte nat somtyme bookes. but .I. putte  
 þat þat makeþ bookes worþi of pris or precious þat is  
 Books are to be  
 valued on account  
 of the *thoughts*  
 they contain.  
 to sein þe sentence of my books. ¶ *And* certainly of  
 585 þi decertes by-stowed in *commune* good. þou hast seid  
 soþe but after þe multitude of þi goode dedys. þou hast  
 seid fewe. *and* of þe vnhonestee or falsnesse of þinges  
 588 þat ben opposed azeins þe. þou hast remembred þinges  
 þat ben knowe to alle folk. and of þe felonies *and*  
 fraudes of þine accusours. it semeþ þe haue I-touched  
 it forsoþe ryztfully *and* schortly. ¶ Al myzten þo

562 *born*—MS. borne, C. |  
 born  
 566 *hys*—hise  
 putte—put  
 563 *be*—ben  
 571 *hap*—MS. hape  
 572 *house*—hows  
 574 [*and*—*clos*]—from C.

576 *wille*—wyl  
 enhabit[e]—enhabyte  
 578 *seye*—sey  
 amoeneþ—moueth  
 579 *myche*—mochel  
 owen—owne  
 ne (2)—omitted  
 582 *putte* (*both*)—put

582 *somtyme*—whilom  
 585 *decertes*—desertes  
 seid—MS. seide, C. seyde  
 586 *soþe*—soþh  
 587 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyde  
 588 *opposed*—aposyd  
 589 *knowe*—knowyn



same þinges bettere *and* more plentiuously be couth 592  
 in þe mouþe of þe poeple þat knoweþ al þis. ¶ þou  
 hast eke blamed gretly *and* compleyned of þe wrongful  
 dede of þe senat. ¶ And þou hast sorwed for my  
 blame. *and* þou hast wepen for þe damage of þi re-  
 nounne þat is appaired. *and* þi laste sorwe eschaufed  
 azeins fortune *and* compleinest þat gerdouns ne ben not  
 euenliche zolde to þe desertes of folk. *and* in þe lattre  
 ende of þi woode muse þou priedest þat þilke pees þat  
 gouerneþ þe heuene scholde gouerne þe erþe ¶ But  
 for þat many tribulaciouns of affeccions han assailed 602  
 þe. *and* sorwe *and* Ire *and* wepyng todrawen þee  
 dyuersely ¶ As þou art now feble of þouzt. myztyer  
 remedies ne schullen not zit touchen þe for whiche  
 we wil[e] vsen somedel lyzter medicines. So þat þilk[e]  
 passiouns þat ben woxen harde in swellng by per-  
 turbacioun folowyng in to þi þouzt mowen woxe esy  
*and* softe to receyuen þe strenkeþ of a more myzty *and*  
 more egré medicine by an esier touchyng. 607

Thou hast, said  
 Philosophy, be-  
 wailed the loss  
 of thy good name,  
 597

thou hast com-  
 plained against  
 Fortune, and  
 against the  
 unequal distribu-  
 tion of rewards  
 and punishments.

Strong medicines  
 are not proper for  
 thee now, dis-  
 tracted by grief,  
 anger, and  
 sadness.

607

Light medicines  
 must prepare  
 thee for sharper  
 remedies.

610

## CUM PHEBI RADIIS GRAUE CANCRI SIDUS ENESTUAT.

Whan þat þe heuy sterre of þe cancre eschaufþ by  
 þe beme of phebus. þat is to seyne whan þat phebus  
 þe sonne is in þe signe of þe Cancre. Who so zeueþ  
 þan largely hys sedes to þe feldeþ þat refuse to re-  
 ceiuen hem. lete hym gon bygyled of trust þat he  
 hadde to hys corn. to acorns or okes. yif þou wilt  
 gadre violettz. ne go þou not to þe purper wode whan  
 þe felde chirkyngre agriseþ of colde by þe felnesse of  
 þe wynde þat hyzt aquilon. ¶ Yif þou desirest or 619

[The sixte  
 metur.]

He who sows his  
 seed when the  
 sun is in the  
 Sign of Cancer,  
 must look for no  
 produce.

615

Think not to in-  
 gather violets in  
 the wintry and  
 stormy season.

592 *be couth*—MS. be couthes,  
 C. ben cowth  
 596 *wepen*—wopen  
 597 *laste*—last  
*eschaufed*—eschaufede  
 598 *not*—omitted  
 599 *zolde*—yolden  
 602 *many*—manye  
 604 *myztyer*—myhtyere  
 605 *whiche*—which

606 *wil[e]*—wol  
*lyzter*—lyhtere  
*þilk[e]*—þilke  
 607 *harde*—hard  
 608 *folowyng*—Flowyng  
*woxe*—wexen  
 610 *esier*—esyere  
 612 *beme*—beemes  
*seyne*—seyn  
 614 *hys*—hise

614 *refuse*—refusen  
 615 *after hem C. adds* [s.  
 corn]  
*lete hym gon* (MS. gone)—  
 lat hym gon  
 616 *or*—of  
*wilt gadre*—wolt gadery  
 618 *felde*—feeld  
*felnesse*—felnesses  
 619 *hyzt*—hyhte



If you wish for wine in autumn let the tendrils of the vine be free in the spring.

wolt vsen grapes ne seke þou nat wip a glotonus hande to streine *and* presse þe stalkes of þe vine in þe first somer sesoun. for bachus þe god of wyne hæþ raper zeuen his 3iftes to autumpne þe latter ende of somer.

[\* fol. 8.]

To every work God assigns a proper time, nor suffers anything to pass its bounds. Success does not await him who departs from the appointed order of things.

¶ God tokeniþ *and* assigneþ \*þe tymes. ablyng hem to her *propre* offices. ¶ Ne he ne suffreþ not stoundes whiche þat hym self hæþ deuided *and* constreined to be medeled to gidre ¶ And forþi he þat foreletþ certeyne ordinaunce of doynge by ouerþrowyng wey. he ne hæþ no glade issue or ende of hys werkes.

PRIMUM IGITUR PATERIS ROGACIONIBUS.

[The syxte prose.]

Philosophy proposes to question Boethius.

FIRST wolt þou suffre me to touche *and* assaie þe stat of þi þouzt by a fewe demaundes. so þat I may vnderstonde what be þe manere of þi curacioun. ¶ Axe

633 me *quod* .I. atte þi wille what þou wilt. *and* I schal answeze. ¶ Þo saide sche þus. wheþer wenest þou *quod* sche þat þis worlde be gouerned by foolisshe happes

P. Is the world governed by Chance?

636 *and* fortunes. or elles wenest þou þat þer be in it any gouernement of resoun. Certes *quod* .I. ne trowe not in no manere þat so certeyne þinges scholde be moeued by fortunouse fortune. but I wot wel þat god maker

B. By no means. The Creator presides over his own works.

640 *and* mayster is gouernour of þis werk. Ne neuer nas 3it day þat myzt[e] putte me oute of þe soþenesse of þat sentence. ¶ So is it *quod* sche. for þe same þing

I shall never swerve from this opinion.

643 songe þou a lytel here byforne *and* byweyledest *and* bywepdest. þat only men weren put oute of þe cure of god. ¶ For of alle oþer þinges þou ne doutest nat þat þei nere gouerned by reson. but how (.i. pape.).

P. Yes! Thou didst say as much when thou didst declare man alone to be destitute of divine care. Still thou seemest to labour under some defect even in this conviction.

I wondre gretly certes whi þat þou art seek. siþen þou art put in to so holesom a sentence. but lat vs seken

620 *hande*—hond  
622 *hab*—MS. hæþe  
625 *her propre*—heere *pro-*  
*pres*  
*not*—nat the  
626 *hab*—MS. hæþe  
627 *be medeled*—ben I-medled  
628 *certeyne*—certeyn

629 *hab*—MS. hæþe  
630 *wolt þou*—woltow  
*stat*—estat  
633 *atte*—at  
*wilt*—wolt  
635 *worlde*—world  
*foolisshe*—foolyssh  
636 *fortunes*—fortunows

638 *scholde*—sholden  
639 *wot*—MS. wote, C. woot  
641 *myzt[e] putte*—myhteput  
644 *put*—MS. putte  
645 *doutest*—dowtedest  
646 *how*—owh  
647 *seek siþen*—syke syn  
648 *put*—MS. putte, C. put

depper. I coniecte þat þere lakkeþ I not what. but 649

sey me þis. siþen þat þou ne doutest nat þat þis worlde  
be gouerned by god ¶ wiþ swycche gouernailes takest

Tell me how the  
world is  
governed.

þou hede þat it is gouerned. ¶ vnneþ quod .I. knowe 652

.I. þe sentence of þi questioun. so þat I ne may nat  
zit answeren to þi demaundes. ¶ I nas nat deceiued

B. I do not  
thoroughly com-  
prehend your  
question.

quod sche þat þere ne faileþ sumwhat. by whiche þe  
maladie of perturbacioun is crept in to þi þouzt. so

P. I was not  
deceived, then,  
when I said  
there was some  
defect in thy  
sentiment.

as þe strengþe of þe paleys schynyng is open. ¶ But  
seye me þis remembrest þou ouzt what is þe ende of

Tell me what is  
the chief end of  
all things; and  
whither all  
things tend.

þi þinges. whider þat þe entencioun of al kynde tendep.  
¶ I haue herd told it somtyme quod .I. but drery- 660

nesse haþ dulled my memorie. ¶ Certys quod sche  
þou wost wel whennes þat alle þinges ben comen and 662

B. God is the  
beginning of all  
things.

proceded. I wot wel quod .I. and answered[e] þat  
god is þe bygynnyng of al. ¶ And how may þis be

P. How, then, art  
thou ignorant of  
their end?

quod sche þat siþen þou knowest þe bygynnyng of  
þinges. þat þou ne knowest not what is þe endyng of

þinges. but swiche ben þe customes of perturbaciouns.  
and þis power þei han. þat þei may moeue a man fro 667

But it is the  
nature of these  
perturbations  
(which thou  
endurest) to un-  
settle men's  
minds.

hys place. þat is to seyne from þe stablenes and per-  
feccioun of hys knowyng. but certys þei may not al

671

arace hym ne alyene hym in al. ¶ But I wolde þat  
þou woldest answer to þis. ¶ Remembrest þou þat

Dost thou re-  
member that  
thou art a man?

þou art a man ¶ Boice. ¶ Whi scholde I nat remem-  
bre þat quod .I. Philosophie. ¶ Maiste þou not telle

B. Certainly I do.

P. What is man?

B. If you ask me  
whether I am a  
rational and  
mortal creature,  
I know and con-  
fess I am.

me þan quod sche what þing is a man. ¶ Axest not  
me quod I. wheþir þat be a resonable best mortel. I

P. But dost thou  
not know that  
thou art more  
than this?

wot wel and I confesse wel þat I am it. ¶ Wistest  
þou neuer zit þat þou were ony oþer þing quod she.

649 *depper*—deppere  
*not what*—not nere what  
650 *siþen*—syn  
*worlde*—world  
651 *takest þou*—takestow  
658 *seye*—sey  
*remembrest þou* — re-  
membrest how  
*ouzt*—omitted  
659 *al*—alle

660 *herd told*—MS. herde  
tolde  
*herd told it*—herd yt toold  
661 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
663 *proceded*—procedeth  
*answered[e]*—answerede  
664 *þe*—omitted  
*al*—alle  
665 *siþen*—syn  
668 *fro*—owt of

669 *seyne from*—seyn fro  
672 *Remembrest þou*—Re-  
menbrethow  
674 *Maiste þou*—Maysthow  
675 *þan*—þanne  
*þing*—þing  
*Axest*—Axestow  
677 *Wistest þou*—wystest-  
how  
678 *þing*—þing

- B. No. No *quod* .I. now wot I *quod* she oper cause of þi  
680 *maladie and þat ryzt grete* ¶ þou hast left forto  
knowe þi self what þou art. þoru3 whiche I haue pley-  
nelyche knowen þe cause of þi *maladie*. or ellis þe  
P. Now I know the principal cause of thy dis-  
temper.  
683 entre of recoueryng of þin hele. ¶ Forwhy for þou  
art *confounded wip forzetyng of þi self*. forþi sorwest  
þou þat þou art exiled of þi *propre goodes*. ¶ And  
for þou ne wost what is þe ende of þinges. for[þi] demest  
[þou] þat *felonous and wikked men ben myzty and weleful*  
for þou hast forzeten by whiche *gouuernementz þe worlde*  
689 is gouerned. ¶ Forþi wenest þou þat þise *mutaciouns*  
of fortune fleten wip *outen gouernour*. þise ben grete  
causes not oonly to *maladie*. but certes grete causes to  
deep ¶ But I þanke þe auctour *and þe makere of*  
heele þat nature haþ not al forleten þe. *and I haue*  
694 g[r]ete norissinges of þi hele. *and þat is þe soþe sen-*  
*tence of gouernaunce of þe worlde*. þat þou byleuest  
þat þe *gouernynge of it nis nat subgit ne vnderput*  
to þe folie \*of þise happes auenterouses. but to þe  
resoun of god ¶ And þer fore doute þe noþing. For  
of þis litel spark þine heet of lijf schal shine. ¶ But  
694 for as muche as it is not tyme zitte of fastere remedies  
¶ And þe nature of þouztes disseiued is þis þat as ofte  
as þei casten aweye soþe opyniouns: þei cloþen hem in  
fals[e] opyniouns. [of whiche false opyniouns] þe derknesse  
of *perturbacioun wexeþ vp*. þat comfoundeþ þe verray  
*insyzt*. *and þat derkenes schal* .I. say somewhat to  
maken þinne *and wayk by lyzt and meenelyche re-*  
medies. so þat after þat þe derknes of desseyuyng  
desyrynges is don away. þou mow[e] knowe þe schyn-  
yng of verray lyzt.
- I have some hope of thy recovery since thou believest that the world is  
[\* fol. 8 b.] under Divine Providence, for this small spark shall produce vital heat.
- But as this is not the time for stronger remedies, and because it is natural to embrace false opinions so soon as we have laid aside the true, from whence arises a mist that darkens the understanding, I shall endeavour therefore to dissipate these vapours so that you may perceive the true light.

630 *hast left*—MS. haste  
lefte, C. hast left  
631 *knowe*—knowen  
*pleynelyche knowen* —  
pleynly fwonde [=]  
founde]  
634 *sorwest þou*—sorwistow  
636 *for[þi] demest [þou]* —  
For thy demesthow  
637 *wikked*—MS. wilked, C.

wykkyd  
638 *worlde*—world  
639 *wenest þou*—wencstow  
690 *outen*—owte  
693 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*al*—alle  
694 *þi*—thin  
696 *vnderput*—vndyrputte  
697 *to* (2)—omitted  
698 *fore*—for

698 *noþing*—nothings  
699 *spark þine heet*—sparke  
700 *muche*—meche [thin hete  
702 *aweye*—away  
703 *of*—*opyniouns*—]—from  
705 *insyzt*—insyhte [C.  
*say*—assaye  
706 *lyzt*—lyhte  
708 *don*—MS. done  
*mow[e]*—mowe



NUBIBUS ATRIS CONDITA.

**P**E sterres couered wip blak[e] cloudes ne mowen  
 geten a doun no lyzt. 3if þe trouble wynde þat  
 hyzt auster stormyng *and* walwyng þe see medleþ þe  
 heete þat is to seyne þe boylyng vp from þe botme  
 ¶ þe wawes þat somtyme weren clere as glas *and*  
 lyke to þe fair[e] bryzt[e] dayes wipstant anon þe  
 syztes of men. by þe filþe *and* ordure þat is resolued.  
*and* þe fletyng streme þat royleþ doun dyuersely fro  
 heyze mountaignes is arestid *and* resisted ofte tyme  
 by þe encountrynge of a stoon þat is departid *and*  
 fallen from some roche. ¶ And forþi yif þou wilt  
 loken *and* demen soþe wip clere lyzt. *and* holde þe  
 weye wip a ryzt pape. ¶ Weyue þou ioie. drif fro þe  
 drede. fleme þou hope. ne lat no sorwe aproche. þat is  
 to sein lat noon of þise four passiouus ouer come þe.  
 or blynde þe. for cloudy *and* dirke is pilk þouzt *and*  
 bounde with bridles. where as þise þinges regnen. 713

[The seuende  
 Metyr.]  
 Black clouds  
 obscure the light  
 of the stars.

If the south wind  
 renders the sea  
 tempestuous, the  
 waves, fouled  
 with mud, will  
 lose their glassy  
 clearness.

If thou wouldst  
 see truth by the  
 clearest light,  
 pursue the path  
 of right.  
 Away with joy,  
 fear, hope, and  
 sorrow.

Let none of these  
 passions cloud  
 thy mind.  
 Where these  
 things control,  
 the soul is bound  
 by strong fetters.

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

INCIPIIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

POSTEA [PAU]LISPER CONTICUIT.

**A**fter þis she stynte a litel. *and* after þat she hadde  
 gadred by atempre stillenesse myn attencioun she  
 seide þus. ¶ As who so myzt[e] seye þus. After þise  
 þinges she stynt[e] a lytel. *and* whanne she aper-  
 ceiued[e] by atempre stillenesse þat I was ententif to  
 herkene hire. she bygan to speke in þis wyse. ¶ Yif

[The fyrst prose.]

Philosophy ex-  
 horts Boethius  
 not to torment  
 himself on  
 account of his  
 losses.

710 blak[e]—blake  
 712 stormyng—turnyng  
 713 from—fro  
 714 somtyme—whilom  
 715 lyke—lyk  
 fair[e]—wipstant (MS.  
 wipstante)—fayre cleere  
 dayes *and* brihte with-  
 stand

716 syztes—syhtes  
 717 streme—strem  
 718 heyze—hy  
 720 from some—fram som  
 witt—wolt  
 721 soþe—soth  
 clere—cleer  
 holde—holden  
 722 weye—wey

722 pape—paath  
 724 come—comen  
 725 blynde—blende  
 pilk—thilke  
 727 she (2)—I  
 729 myzt[e] seye—myhte seyn  
 730 stynt[e]—stynte  
 732 hire—here



- 733 I *quod* she haue vnderstonden *and* knowe vtterly þe causes *and* þe habit of þi maladie. þou languissed *and* art deffeted for talent *and* desijr of þi raper fortune.
- Thou art, she says, affected by the loss of thy former fortune.
- 736 ¶ She þat ilke fortune only þat is changed as þou feinst to þe ward. haþ peruerted þe clerenesse *and* þe astat of þi corage. ¶ I vnderstonde þe felefolde colour *and* deceites of þilke merueillous monstre fortune. and how she vseþ ful flatryng familiarite wiþ hem
- It hath perverted thy faculties. I am well acquainted with all the wiles of that Prodigy (*i. e.* Fortune).
- 741 þat she enforceþ to bygyle. so longe til þat she confounde wiþ vnsuffreable sorwe hem þat she haþ left
- 743 in despeir vnpurueyed. ¶ *and* if þou remembrest wel þe kynde þe maners *and* þe desert of þilke fortune. þow shalt wel knowe as in hir þou neuer ne haddest ne hast ylost any fair þing. But as I trowe I shal not
- Though she has left thee, thou hast not lost anything of beauty or of worth.
- 747 gretly trauaile to don þe remembren of þise þinges.
- ¶ For þou were wont to hurtlen [*and* despysen] hir wiþ manly wordes whan she was blaundissinge *and* presente *and* pursewedest hir wiþ sentences þat were
- Thou wert once proof against her allurements.
- 751 drawn oute of myne entre. þat is to seyne out of myn informacioun ¶ But no sudeyne mutacioun ne bytideþ nat wiþ outen a maner chaungyng of curages. and so is it byfallen þat þou art departed a litel fro þe pees of þi þouzt. but now is tyme þat þou drynke *and* atast[*e*] some softe *and* delitable þinges. so þat whan þei ben entred wiþ inne þe. it mow make weye to strenger drynkes of medycynes. ¶ Com nowe furþe þerfore þe suasioun of swetnesse Rethoryen. whiche þat goþ oonly þe ryzt wey whil she forsakeþ not myne estatutz. ¶ *And* wiþ Rethorice com forþe musice a
- But sudden change works a great alteration in the minds of men, hence it is that thou art departed from thy usual peace of mind. But with some gentle emollients I shall prepare thee for stronger medicines. Approach then, Rhetoric, with thy persuasive charms, and therewith let Music also draw near.
- 762 damoysel of oure house þat syngeþ now lyzter moedes

733 knowe vtterly—knownen  
owtrelly  
734 languissed—languyssst  
737 hab—MS. haþe  
738 astat—estat  
felefolde—felefold  
739 colour—colours  
deceites (MS. decrites) —  
deceytes  
merueillous—meruayles  
742 hab—MS. haþe  
743 if—yif

746 any (MS. my)—any  
þing—thinge  
747 trauaile—travaylen  
don—do  
remembren of—remenbre  
on  
748 [*and* despysen]—from C.  
749 was—omitted  
750 were—weren  
751 myne—myn  
seyne—sayn  
752 sudeyne—sodeyn

753 outen—owte  
757 inne—in  
mow — weye — mowe  
maken wey  
758 strenger—strengere  
Com nowe furþe — MS.  
Come; C. Com now forth  
760 goþ—MS. goþe  
761 com—MS. come, C. com  
762 house—hows  
lyzter—lyhtere

or *prolaciouns* now heuyer. \*what ayleþ þe man. what [ \* fol. 9.]  
is it þat haþ cast þe in to murnyng *and* in to wepyng. 764  
I trow[e] þat þou hast sen some newe þing *and* un-  
coupe. ¶ þou wenest þat fortune be chaunged azeins  
þe ¶ But þou wenest wrong. yif þou [þat] wene. But thou art  
Alwey þo ben hire maners. she haþ raþer [kept] as to 768  
þe ward hire *propre* stablenes in þe chaungyng of hyre  
self. ¶ Ryzt swyche was she whan she flatered[e]  
þe. *and* desseiued[e] þe wiþ vnleueful lykynges of  
false welefulnesse. þou hast now knowen *and* ataynt  
þe doutous or double visage of þilke blynde goddesse  
fortune. ¶ She þat zit couereþ hir *and* wympleþ hir  
to oþer folk. haþ shewed hir euerydel to þe. ¶ 3if  
þou approuest hir *and* þenkest þat she is good. vse 776  
hir maners *and* pleyne þe nat. ¶ And if þou agrisest  
hir fals[e] trecherie. dispise *and* cast aweye hir þat  
pleyep so harmefully. for she þat is now cause of so  
myche sorwe to þe. sholde be to þe cause of pees *and* 780  
[of] ioie. ¶ she haþ forsaken þe forsoþe. þe whiche  
þat neuer man may be syker þat she ne shal forsake  
hym. *Glose.* ¶ But napeles some bookes han þe text  
þus. For soþe she haþ forsaken þe ne þer nis no man 784  
syker þat she ne haþ not forsaken. ¶ Holdest þou  
þan þilke welefulnesse *precieuse* to þe þat shal passen.  
*and* is present fortune derworþi to þe. whiche þat nis  
not feiþful forto dwelle. *and* whan she goþ aweye þat  
she bryngeþ a wyzt in sorwe ¶ For syn she may nat  
be wiþholden at a mans wille. she makeþ hym a wrecche  
whan she departeþ fro hym. ¶ What oþer þing is 791

Thou thinkest  
that Fortune is  
changed towards  
thee.

But thou art  
deceived.

In this misad-  
venture of thine  
she hath pre-  
served her con-  
stancy in  
changing.

772

You have seen  
the double face  
of this blind  
divinity.

776

If thou dost  
abhor her perfidy  
cast her off, for  
her sports are  
dangerous.

780

784

Is that happiness  
which is so  
transient ?

Is the attendance  
of Fortune so dear  
to thee, whose  
stay is so uncer-  
tain, and whose  
removal causes  
such grief ?

763 *prolaciouns* — probasy-  
ons  
*heuyer*—heuyere  
*ayleþ*—eyleth  
765 *trow[e]*—trowe  
*sen*—MS. sene, C. seyn  
*some*—som  
*þing*—thinge  
*uncoupe*—vinkowth  
766 *azeins*—ayein  
767 *wenest*—weenes  
[þat]—C. that  
768 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
[kept]—from C.

769 *stabilnes in þe*—stabil-  
nesse standeth in the  
770 *swyche*—swich  
771 *vnleueful*—vnlefful  
775 *haþ*—MS. had, C. hat  
776 *good*—MS. goode, C. god  
777 *agrisest*—MS. agrised, C.  
*agrysyst*  
778 *fals[e]*—false  
780 *myche*—mochel  
781 [of]—from C.  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
783 *text*—texte  
784 *haþ*—MS. haþe

785 *forsaken*—forsake  
*Holdest þou*—holdestow  
786 *þan*—thanne  
*precieuse*—presyes  
787 *derworþi*—dereworthe  
*whiche*—which  
788 *feifful*—feythfull  
*gop*—MS. goþe  
*aweye*—away  
790 *mans*—mannys  
791 *whan*—wan  
*þing*—thinge

What is she  
(Fortune) but the  
presage of future  
calamity?

fitting fortune but a manere shewing of wrychednesse  
794 þat is to comen. ne it ne suffriþ nat oo[n]ly to loken  
of þing þat is present byforne þe eyen of man. but  
wisdom lokeþ *and* mesureþ þe ende of þinges. *and* þe  
796 same chaungyng from one to an oþer. þat is to seyne

Her mutability  
should make men  
neither fear her  
threats nor desire  
her favours.

fro aduersite to prosperite makeþ þat þe manaces of  
fortune ne ben not forto dreden. ne þe flatrynges of  
hir to ben desired. ¶ þus atte þe last it byhoueþ þe  
to suffren wiþ euene wille in pacience al þat is don  
801 inwiþ þe floor of fortune. þat is to seyne in þis worlde.

If you submit to  
her yoke you  
must patiently  
endure her  
infictions.

¶ Syþen þou hast oones put þi nekke vnder þe zokke  
of hir. for if þou wilt write a lawe of wending *and* of  
dwellyng to fortune whiche þat þou hast chosen frely

Impatience will  
only embitter  
your loss.

805 to be þi lady ¶ Art þou nat wrongful in þat *and*  
makest fortune wroþe *and* aspere by þin impacience.  
*and* zit þou mayst not chaungen hir. ¶ Yif þou com-  
mittest [*and*] bitakest þi sayles to þe wynde. þou shalt

You cannot  
choose your port  
if you leave your  
vessel to the  
mercy of the  
winds.

be shouen not pider þat þou woldest(:) but whider þat  
þe wynde shoueþ þe ¶ Yif þou castest þi seedes in þe

You have given  
yourself up to  
Fortune; it be-  
comes you there-  
fore to obey her  
commands.

811 feldeþ þou sholdest haue in mynde þat þe zeres ben  
oþer while plenteuous *and* oþer while bareyne. ¶ þou  
hast bytaken þiself to þe gouernaunce of fortune.  
*and* forþi it byhoueþ þe to ben obeisaunt to þe manere

Would you stop  
the rolling of her  
wheel?

of þi lady. *and* enforecest þou þe to aresten or wiþ-  
stonden þe swyftnesse *and* þe sweyes of hir tournyng

Fool! if Fortune  
once became  
stable she would  
cease to exist.

wehe. ¶ O þou fool of alle mortel fooles if fortune  
bygan to dwelle stable. she cesed[e] þan to ben fortune.

793 *suffriþ*—suffiseth  
794 *of þing*—on thyng  
*byforne*—MS. byforne by-  
forne  
*man*—a man  
795 *mesureþ*—amesureth  
796 *from one*—fram oon  
*seyne*—seyne  
797 *fro*—from  
*to*—into  
799 *atte þe last*—at the laste

801 *seyne*—seyne  
*worlde*—world  
802 *Syþen*—Syn  
*zokke*—yoke  
803 *if*—yif  
*write*—wryten  
804 *whiche*—which  
805 *lady*—ladye  
*Art þou*—Artow  
806 *wroþe*—wroth  
*þin*—thine

807 *chaungen*—chaunge  
808 [*and*]—from C.  
809 *pider*—thedyr  
*whider*—whedyr  
811 *haue*—han  
814 *manere*—maneres  
815 *and*—omitted  
*wiþstonden*—withholden  
816 *sweyes*—swey3  
818 *cesed[e]*—cesede



HEC CUM SUPERBA.

Whan fortune wiþ a proude ryzt hande haþ turnid  
hir chaungyng stoundes she fareþ lyke þe maners  
of þe boillyng eurippe. *Glose.* Eurippe is an arme of  
þe see þat ebbith *and* flowiþ. *and* somtyme þe streme  
is on one syde *and* somtyme on þat oþer. *Texte* ¶ She  
cruel fortune kasteþ adoune kynges þat somtyme weren  
ydred. *and* she deceiuable enhaunseth vp þe humble  
chere of hym þat is discomfited. *and* she neyþer hereþ  
ne reccheþ of wrecched[e] wepynges. *and* she is so harde  
þat she lauzeþ *and* scorneþ þe wepyng of hem þe whiche  
she haþ makid wepe wiþ hir free wille. ¶ þus she  
pleyþ *and* þus she preueþ hir strengþe *and* sheweþ a  
grete wondre to alle hir seruauantz. ¶ Yif þat a wyzt  
is seyn weleful *and* ouerprowe in an houre.

[The fyrst metur.  
Fortune is as in-  
constant as the  
ebb and flow of  
Eurippus.

822

She hurls kings  
from their  
thrones, and  
exalts the cap-  
tive.

826

She turns a deaf  
ear to the tears  
and cries of the  
wretched.

Thus she sports  
and boasts her  
power and pre-  
sents a marvel  
to her servants  
if, in the space of  
an hour, a man is  
hurled from  
happiness into  
adversity.

832

VELLEM AUTEM PAUCA.

Certis I wolde plete wiþ þee a fewe þinges vsynge  
þe wordes of fortune tak heede now þi self. yif þat  
she axeþ ryzt. \* ¶ O þou man wher fore makest þou  
me gilty by þine euerydayes pleynynges. what wronges  
haue I don þe. what goodes haue I byrest þe þat weren  
þine. stryf or plete wiþ me by fore what iuge þat þou  
wilt of þe possessioun of rychesse or of dignites ¶ And  
yif þou maist shewe me þat euer any mortal man haþ  
receyued any of þese þinges to ben his in propre. þan  
wol I graunt[e] frely þat [alle] þilke þinges weren þine  
whiche þat þou axest. ¶ Whan þat nature brouzt[e] þe  
forþe out of þi moder wombe. I receyued[e] þe naked

[The secunde  
prose.]

Philosophy ex-  
postulates with  
[" fol. 9 b.]  
Boethius in the  
name of Fortune.

Why do you  
accuse me (For-  
tune) as guilty?

What goods or  
advantages have  
I deprived you  
of?

840

Can you prove  
that ever any  
man had a fixed  
property in his  
riches?

You came naked  
into the world,

819 *proude*—prowd  
*hande*—hand  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
820 *lyke*—lik  
821 *arme*—arm  
822 *streme*—stream  
823 *one*—o  
824 *adoune*—adown  
*somtyme*—whilom  
825 *ydred* (MS. *yðredde*)—  
*humble*—vmbles [ydrad  
827 *reccheþ*—rekkeþ

827 *wrecched[e]*—wrecchede  
*harde*—hard  
828 *lauzeþ*—lyssheth  
*wepung*—wepynge  
830 *strengþe*—strengthes  
833 *plete*—pleten  
834 *tak*—MS. take, C. tak  
835 *makest þou*—makes thow  
836 *wronges*—wrouge  
837 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
*byrest*—MS. byreste, C.  
byrest

838 *stryf*—MS. stryue, C. stryf  
*plete*—pleten  
*by fore*—by forn  
839 *wilt*—wolt  
*rychesse*—rychesses  
840 *shewe*—shewyn  
*euer*—euer  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
841 *þese*—tho  
*his*—hise  
842 *graunt[e]*—graunte  
[*alle*]—from C.



and I cherished you *and* nedy of al þing. *and* I norysshed[e] þe wiþ my rychesse. *and* was redy *and* ententif þoruþ my fauour to

847 sustene þe. ¶ And þat makeþ þe now inpatient azeins

and encompassed you with affluence.

Now that I have a mind to withdraw my bounty, be thankful and complain not.

me. *and* I envirounde þe wiþ al þe habundaunce *and* shynyg of al goodes þat ben in my ryzt. ¶ Now it

lykeþ me to wiþ drawe myne hande. þou hast had grace as he þat haþ vsed of foreyne goodes. þou hast no ryzt to pleyne þe. as þouþ þou haddest vtterly lorn alle þi

853 þinges. whi pleyneþ þou þan. I haue don þe no wrong.

Riches and honours are subject to me. They are my servants, and come and go with me.

Ricches honoures *and* swyche oþer þinges ben of my ryzt. ¶ My seruauntes knowen me for hir lady. þei comen wiþ me *and* departen whan I wende. I dar wel

affermen hardyly. þat yif þo þinges of whiche þou

858 pleyneþ þat þou hast forlorn hadde ben þine. þou ne

Shall I alone be forbidden to use my own right? Doth not heaven give us sunny days and obscure the same with dark nights?

Is not the earth covered with frost as well as with flowers?

haddest not lorn hem. ¶ shal I þan only be defended to vse my ryzt. ¶ Certis it is leueful to þe heuene to

make clere dayes. *and* after þat to keuere þe same dayes wiþ derke nyztes. ¶ þe erþe haþ eke leue to appaiaile

þe visage of þe erþe now with floures *and* now wiþ fruyt. *and* to confounde hem somtyme wiþ raynes *and*

865 wiþ coldes. ¶ þe see haþ eke hys ryzt. to be som-

The sea sometimes appears calm, and at other times terrifies us with its tempestuous waves.

Shall I be bound to constancy by the covetousness of men?

tyme calme *and* blaundyshing wiþ smoþe water. *and* somtyme to be horrible wiþ wawes *and* wiþ tempestes.

¶ But þe couetyse of men þat may not be stauched shal it bynde me to be stedfast. syn þat stedfastnesse is vnkouþ to my maneres. ¶ Swyche is my strengþe.

871 *and* þis pley. I pley[e] continuely. I tourne þe whirlyng

I turn my rolling wheel and amuse myself with exalting what

whele wiþ þe tournyng cercle ¶ I am glade to chaunge þe lowest to þe heyeste. *and* þe heyeste to þe loweste.

845 *al þing*—alle things

*norysshed[e]*—noryssede.

846 *rychesse*—rychesses

848, 849 *al*—alle

848 *habundaunce*—aboundaunce

850 *wiþ*—hande—withdrawen myn hand

*had*—MS. hadde, C. had

851 *haþ*—MS. haþe

852 *vtterly*—outrely

*lorn*—MS. lorne, C. forlorn

853 *don*—MS. done, C. don

854 *Ricches*—Rychesses

853 *forlorn*—MS. forlorne, C. forlorn

859 *lorn*—MS. lorne, C. lorn

860 *vse*—vsen

861 *keuere þe*—coeueryn tho

862 *derke*—dirk

*erþe*—yer

*haþ*—MS. haþe

864 *confounde*—confownden

865 *haþ*—MS. haþe

866 *calme*—kalm

867 (2nd) *wiþ*—omitted

869 *stedfast*—stidefast

*stedfastnesse*—stidefastnesse

870 *vnkouþ*—MS. vnkouþe, C. vnkowth

*Swyche*—Swych

871 *pley[e]*—pleye

872 *whele*—wheele

*glade*—glad

*chaunge*—chaungyn

worpe vp yif þou wilt. so it be by þis lawe. þat þou  
ne holde not þat I do þe wronge þou; þou descende  
doun whanne resoun of my pleye axep it. Wost þou  
not how Cresus kyng of lyndens of whiche kyng Cirus  
was ful sore agast a litel byforne þat þis rewlyche  
Cresus was cauȝt of Cirus and lad to þe sijn to be  
brent. but þat a reyne descended[e] doun from heuene  
þat rescowed[e] hym ¶ And is it out of þi mynde how  
þat Paulus consul of Rome whan he hadde take þe  
kyng of perciens weep pitou[s]ly for þe captiuitee of þe  
self[e] kyng. What oper þinges bywaylen þe criinges of  
Tragedies. but only þe dedes of fortune. þat wiþ an  
vnwar stroke ouerturneþ þe realmes of grete nobley  
¶ *Glose.* Tragedie is to seyne a dite of a prosperite for  
a tyme þat endiþ in wrechednesse. Leredest nat þou  
in grek whan þou were ȝonge þat in þe entre or in þe  
seler of Iuppiter þer ben couched two tunnes. þat on  
is ful of good þat oper is ful of harme. ¶ What ryȝt  
hast þou to pleyne. yif þou hast taken more plenteuously  
of þe goode syde þat is to seyne of my rycchesse and  
prosperites. and what eke. yif I be nat departed fro þe.  
What eke. yif my mutabilitee ȝiueþ þe ryȝtful cause of  
hope to han ȝit better þinges. ¶ Napeles desmaie þe  
nat in þi þouȝt. and þou þat art put in comune realme  
of alle: ne desijr[e] nat to lyue by þine oonly propre ryȝt.

was low, and  
bringing down  
what was high.  
Ascend if you  
will, but come  
down when my  
sport requires it.

878

Know you not  
the history of  
Cresus and of  
Paulus Æmiliius ?

883

What else does  
the weeping  
muse of Tragedy  
deplere but the  
overthrow of  
kingdoms by  
the indiscrimin-  
ate strokes of  
Fortune ?  
Did you not learn  
whilst a youth,  
that at the gates  
of Jove's palace  
stand two vessels,  
one full of bless-  
ings, the other of  
woes ?

What if you have  
drunk too deep of  
the first vessel ?

894

My mutability  
gives thee hope  
of happier days.

Desire not to be  
exempted from  
the vicissitudes of  
humanity.

## SI QUANTAS RAPIDIS.

þouȝ plentee þat is goddesse of rycches hielde adoun  
wiþ ful horn. and wiþdraweþ nat hir hand. ¶ As  
many recches as þe see turneþ vpwardes sandes whan it

[the secunde  
metur.]

Though Plenty,  
from her teeming  
horn, poured  
down as many

874 *worpe*—worth  
*wilt*—wolt

876 *doun*—adoun  
*whanne*—wan  
*pleye*—pley

*Wost þou*—wistesthow  
877 *kyng* (1)—the kyng

*lyndens*—lydyens

878 *byforne*—byforn

880 *reyne descended*[e]—

*rayn descendede*

880 *from*—fro

881 *rescowed*[e]—rescowede

882 *take*—takyn

885 *an*—a

886 *þe*—omitted

887 *seyne*—seyn

890 *tunnes*—tonnes

891 *harme*—harm

892 *hast þou*—hasthow

893 *seyne*—seyn

*rycchesse*—rychesses

894 *I be nat*—I ne be nat al

896 *better*—betere

898 *lyue*—lyuen

*þine*—thin

899 *rycches*—rychesses

901 *recches*—rychesses

*vpwardes*—vpward

riches on the world as there are sands on the sea-shore, or stars in heaven, mankind would not cease to complain. [\* fol. 10.]

is moeued wiþ rauysshing blastes. or ellys as many rycches as þer shynen bryzt[e] sterres on heuene on þe sterry nyzt. 3it for al þat mankynde nolde not cesce to woþe wrecched[e] pleyntes. ¶ And al be it so \*þat god receyueþ gladly her prayers *and* zeueþ hem as ful large muche golde *and* apparaileþ coueytous folk wiþ noble or clere honours. 3it semeþ hem haue I-gete noþing. but alwey her cruel ravyne deuourynge al þat þei han geten shewiþ oþer gapinges. þat is to seye gapen *and* desiren 3it after moo rycchesse. ¶ What brideles myzten wiþholde to any certeyne ende þe desordene coueitise of men ¶ Whan euere þe raper þat it fletip in large 3iftis: þe more ay brenneþ in hem þe þrest of hauyng. ¶ Certis he þat quakyng *and* dredeful weneþ 916 hym seluen nedy. he ne lyueþ neuere mo ryche.

Though Heaven may grant every desire, they will still cry for more.

What rein can restrain unbound-ed avarice ?

He who thinks himself poor, though he be rich, doth truly labour under poverty.

HIIS IGITUR SI PRO SE.

[The thrydde prose.]

¶ Fortune spake thus to you, you could not defend your complaint.

þerfore yif þat fortune spake wiþ þe for hir self in þis manere. For soþe þou ne haddest [nat] what þou myztest answeere. and if þou hast any þing wherwiþ. þou mayist ryztfully tellen þi compleynt. ¶ It 921 byhoueþ þe to shewen it. *and* .I. wol zeue þe space to tellen it. ¶ Certeynely *quod* I þan þise ben faire þinges *and* enoyntid wiþ hony swetnesse of rethorike *and* musike. *and* only while þei ben herd þei ben deliouse. ¶ But to wrecches is a deppere felyng of harme. þis is to seyn þat wrecches felen þe harmes þat þei suffren more greuously þan þe remedies or þe delites 928 of þise wordes mowe gladen or comforten hem. so þat

B. What you have said is very specious, but such discourses are only sweet while they strike our ears. They cannot efface the deep impressions that misery has made in the heart.

902 *rauysshing*—rauysynge  
903 *rycches*—rychesses  
*bryzt[e]*—bryhte  
*on* (1)—in  
904 *nyzt*—nyhtes  
905 *woþe wrecched[e]*—weþe  
wrecchede  
906 *her*—hir  
*ful*—fool  
907 *muche*—mcche  
*folk*—men

908 *haue*—hauen  
*I-gete*—I-getyn  
909 *her*—hir  
910 *seye*—seyn  
911 *rychesse*—rychesses  
912 *wiþholde*—wytholden  
*certeyne*—certeyn  
914 *þrest*—þurst  
915 *dredeful*—dredful  
916 *lyueþ*—leueth  
918 [nat]—from C.

919 *if*—yif  
920 *mayist*—mayst  
*tellen*—defendyn  
921 *zeue*—yeuyn  
922 *þan*—þanne  
*ben*—bet (= beth)  
923 *swetnesse*—swetnesse  
924 *while*—whil  
*herd*—MS. herde  
926 *harme*—harm  
928 *mowe*—mowen



whan þise þinges stynten forto soun[e] in eres. þe sorwe 929

þat is inset greueþ þe þouzt. Ryzt so is it *quod* she.

¶ For þise ne ben zit none remedies of þi maladie. but

þei ben a manere norissinges of þi sorwe zit rebel

azeyne þi curacioun. ¶ For whan þat tyme is. I shal

moue swiche þinges þat *percen* hem self depe. ¶ But

napeles þat þou shalt not wilne to leten þi self a

wrecche. ¶ Hast þou forzeten þe noumbre *and* þe

manere of þi wefulnessse. I holde me stille how þat

þe souerayn men of þe Citee token þe in cure *and*

kepyng whan þou were orphelyn of fadir *and* modir.

*and* were chosen in affinite of princes of þe Citee.

¶ And þou bygunne raþer to ben leef *and* deere þan 941

forto ben a ney3bour. þe whiche þing is þe most pre-

ciouse kynde of any *propinquitee* or aliaunce þat may

ben. ¶ Who is it þat ne seide þou nere ryzt weleful 944

wiþ so grete a nobley of þi fadres in lawe. ¶ *And* wiþ

þe chastite of þi wijf. *and* wiþ þe oportunitie *and*

noblesse of þi masculyn children. þat is to seyne þi

sones *and* ouer al þis me lyst to passe of comune þinges. 948

¶ How þou haddest in þi þouzt dignitees þat weren

warned to olde men. but it deliteþ me to comen now to

þe singular vphepyng of þi wefulnessse. ¶ Yif any

fryt of mortal þinges may han any wey3te or price of 952

wefulnessse. ¶ Myztest þou euere forzeten for any

charge of harme þat myzt[e] byfallen. þe remembraunce

of pilke day þat þou sey[e] þi two sones maked conseillers.

*and* ylad to gidre from þin house vndir so gret

assemble of senatours. *and* vndir þe blyþenness of poeple. 957

*and* whan þou say[e] hem sette in þe court in her

P. So it is indeed; for my arguments are not designed as remedies, but as lenitives only.

When time serves, I will administer those things that shall reach the seat of your disease.

But you are not among the number of the wretched.

I shall not speak of your happiness in being provided for (in your orphanage) by the chief men of the city;

nor of your noble alliance with Festus and Symmachus;

944

nor of your virtuous wife, and manly sons.

Can you ever forget the memorable day that saw your two sons invested with the dignity of Consuls?

929 *soun[e]*—sowne

930 *inset*—MS. *insette*, C. inset

932 *sorwe*—sorwes

933 *azeyne*—ayein

934 *moue swiche*—moeue swych

938 *souerayn*—souerane

942 *ney3bour*—neysshebour

944 *nere*—were

945 *nobley*—nobleye

*fadres*—fadyr-is

947 *seyne*—seyn

948 *lyst*—lyste

*passse of*—passen the

949 *þouzt*—yowthe

950 *warned*—werned

952 *fryyt*—frute

*price*—pris

953 *Myztest þou*—myhtes-

thow

954 *harme*—harm

*myzt[e]* *byfallen*—mylito

befalle

955 *sey[e]*—saye

956 *from*—fro

*gret*—MS. grete, C. gret

958 *say[e]*—saye

*sette*—set

*her*—heere



When in the circus you satisfied the expectant multitude with a triumphal largess?

chaires of dignites. ¶ Þou rethorien or pronouncere of kynges preysinges. deseruedest glorie of wit *and* of eloquence. whan þou sitting bytwix þi two sones con-

963 abydyng of multitude of poeple þat was sprad about þe wip large praysynge *and* laude as men syngen in victories. þo 3aue þou wordes of fortune as I trowe. þat is to seyne. þo feffedest þou fortune wip glosynge wordes *and* desseiuedest hir. whan she accoied[e] þe *and* norsshed[e] þe as hir owen delices. ¶ Þou hast

By your expressions you flattered Fortune, and obtained from her a gift which never before fell to any private person.

969 had of fortune a zifte þat is to seyng swiche gerdoun þat she neu[er]e 3af to præue man ¶ Wilt þou þerfore leye a rekenyng wip fortune. she haþ now twynkeled first vpon þe wip a wykked eye. ¶ Yif þou considere þe noumbre *and* þe manere of þi blysses. *and* of þi sorwes. \*þou maist nat forsake þat þou nart 3it blysfyl. For if þou þerfore wenest þi self nat weleful for þinges

Will you therefore call Fortune to account?

She now begins, I own, to look unkindly on you; but if you consider the number of your blessings,

[\* fol. 10 b.] you must confess that you are still happy.

976 þat þo semeden ioyful ben passed. ¶ Þer nis nat whi þou sholdest wene þi self a wrecche. for þinges þat now semen soory passen also. ¶ Art þou now comen firste

These evils that you suffer are but transitory.

979 a sodeyne gest in to þe shadowe or tabernacle of þis lijf. or trowest þou þat any stedfastnesse be in mannis þinges. ¶ Whan ofte a swifte houre dissolueþ þe same man. þat is to seyne whan þe soule departiþ fro þe body. For al þou3 þat yelde is þer any feiþ þat fortunous þinges willen dwelle. 3it napeles þe last[e] day of a mannis lijf is a manere deef to fortune. *and* also to pilke þat haþ dwelt. *and* þerfore what wenist þou þar recche yif þou forlete hir *in* deyng or ellys þat she fortune forlete þe *in* fleenge away.

Can there be any stability in human affairs, when the life of man is exposed to dissolution every hour?

The last day of life puts an end to Prosperity.

What matters it then, whether you by death leave it, or it (Fortune) by flight doth leave you?

961 *bytwix*—bytwyen  
962 *hyzt*—hihte  
963 *of* (I)—of the  
*about*—abowten  
964 *wip*—with so  
965 *3aue*—MS. þan, C. yaue  
*of*—to  
966 *seyne*—seyng  
967 *accoied[e]*—acyoyede  
968 *norsshed[e]*—noryssede  
*owen*—owne  
þou — *of* — thow bar  
away of

969 *had*—MS. hadde  
*swiche*—swich  
970 *præue*—pryue  
971 *leye*—lye  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
972 *wykked*—wyckede  
973 *blysses*—blysse  
974 *forsake*—forsakyn  
*nart*—art  
*blysfyl*—blysseful  
978 *soory*—sorye  
*firste*—fyrst  
979 *sodeyne*—sodeyn

979 *shadowe*—shadwe  
980 *stedfastnesse*—stedefast-  
981 *swifte*—swyft [nesse  
*dissolueþ*—dyssoluede  
983 *al þou3 þat*—al þat  
though  
*fortunous*—fortune  
984 *willen dwelle*—wolen  
*last[e]*—laste [dwellyn  
986 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*wenist þou*—weenestow  
987 *þar recche*—dar recche  
988 *away*—away

CUM PRIMO POLO.

Whan phebus þe sonne bygynneþ to spreden his clere-  
nesse with rosene chariettes. þan þe sterre ydimmyd  
paleþ hir white cheres. by þe flamus of þe sonne þat  
ouer comeþ þe sterre lyzt. ¶ þis is to seyn whan þe  
sonne is risen þe day sterre wexiþ pale and lesiþ hir  
lyzt for þe grete bryztnesse of þe sonne. ¶ Whan þe  
wode wexeþ redy of rosene floures in þe first somer  
sesoun þoruþ þe breþe of þe wynde Zephirus þat wexeþ  
warme. ¶ Yif þe cloudy wynde auster blowe felliche.  
þan goþ away þe fayrnesse of þornes. Ofte þe see is  
clere and calme wiþoute moeuynge floodes. And ofte  
þe horrible wynde aquilon moeueþ boylyng tempestes  
and ouer whelweþ þe see. ¶ Yif þe forme of þis worlde  
is so [zeelde] stable. and yif it tourniþ by so many  
entrechaungynges. wilt þou þan trusten in þe trublynge  
fortunés of men. wilt þou trowen in flittyng goodes.  
It is certeyne and establissed by lawe perdurable þat no  
þing þat is engendred nys stedfast no stable.

[The .iij. Metur.]

The stars pale be-  
fore the light of  
the rising sun.

993

Westerly winds  
deck the wood  
with roses, but  
easterly winds  
cause their  
beauty to fade.

997

Now the sea is  
calm, and again  
it is tempestuous.

1000

If all things thus  
vary, will you  
trust in transitory  
riches?

1004

All here below is  
unstedfast and  
unstable.

TUNC EGO UERA INQUAM.

þAnne seide I þus. O notice of alle uertues þou  
seist ful soþe. ¶ Ne I may nat forsake þe ryzt[e]  
swifte cours of my prosperitee. þat is to seine. þat  
prosperitee ne be comen to me wondir swiftly and  
soone. but þis is a þing þat gretly smertiþ me whan it  
remembreþ me. ¶ For in alle aduersitees of fortune þe  
most vnsely kynde of contrariouse fortune is to han  
ben weleful. ¶ But þat þou quod she abaist þus þe  
tourment of þi fals[e] opinioun þat maist þou not ryzt-

[The ferthe prose.]

B. I cannot deny  
my sudden and  
early prosperity.

1010

It is the remem-  
brance of former  
happines that  
adds most to  
man's infelicity.

P. Recollect that  
you have yet  
much affluence.

989 his—hyr  
990 þan—thanne  
991 flamus—flambes  
995 redy—rody  
    rosene—rosyn  
997 warme—warm  
998 goþ—MS. goþe, C. goth  
    fayrnesse—fayrenesse  
999 clere—cleer  
    calme—kalm

1000 wynde—wynd  
1001 whelweþ—weluceth  
1002 [zeelde]—from C.  
1003, 1004 wilt þou—wolthow  
1003 þan—thanne  
    trublynge—towmblynge  
1004 in flittyng—on flet-  
1005 It is—is it [tyuge  
1006 no—ne  
    stable—estable

1008 soþe—soth  
    Ne I may—Ne I ne may  
1009 seine—seyn  
1011 a—omitted  
    gretly—gretely  
1012 aduersitees—aduersyte  
1013 most—mooste  
1014 abaist—abyest  
1015 tourment—tourmentz  
    fals[e]—false

fully blamen ne aretten to þinges. as who seiþ for þou hast zitte many habundaunces of þinges. ¶ *Textus.*

1018 For al be it so þat þe ydel name of auenterouse welefulnesse moeueþ þe now. it is leueful þat þou rekene *with* me of hōw many[e] þinges þou hast zit plentee.

What you esteemed most precious in your happy days, you still retain,

¶ And þefore yif þat þilke þing þat þou haddeþ for most precious in alle þi rycchesse of fortune be kept to þe by þe grace of god vnwemmed *and* vndefouled.

and ought therefore not to complain.

1023 Mayst þou þan pleyne ryztfully vpon þe myschief of fortune. syn þou hast zit þi best[e] þinges. ¶ Certys zit

1026 lyueþ in goode poynt þilke precious honour of mankynde. ¶ Symacus þi wyues fadir whiche þat is a man maked al of sapience *and* of vertue. þe whiche

Symmachus, dear to you as life,

1029 man þou woldest b[i]en redely wiþ þe pris of þin owen lijf. he byweyleþ þe wronges þat men don to þee. *and* not for hym self. for he liueþ in sykernesse of any sentence put azeins hym. ¶ And zit lyueþ þi wif þat

is safe and in health.

Your wife Rusticiana is also alive,

1034 of chastitee. and for I wol closen shortly her bountes she is lyke to hir fadir. I telle þe welle þat she lyueþ

and bewails her separation from you.

loop of hir life. *and* kepþ to þee onoly hir goost. *and* is al maat *and* ouer-comen by wepyng *and* sorwe for

1038 desire of þe ¶ In þe whiche þing only I mot graunten þat þi welefulnesse is amenused. ¶ What shal I seyn

Why need I mention your two sons, in whom so much of the wit

[\* fol. 11.] and spirit of their sire and grand-sire doth shine?

And since it is the chief care of man to preserve life; you are still

eke of þi two sones conseilours of whiche as of children of hir age þer shineþ \*þe lyknesse of þe witte of hir fadir *and* of hir eldefadir. and siþen þe souereyn cure of alle mortel folke is to sauen hir owen lyues. ¶ O how weleful art þou þou; þou knowe þi goodes.

1016 seiþ—MS. seipe, C. seyh

1017 zitte—yit

1019 leueful—leefful

1020 many[e] þinges—manye grete thinges

1022 alle—al

1023 þe by—the yit by

1024 myschief—meschef

1025 best[e]—beste

1026 lyueþ—leueth

good—good

1027 whiche—which

1028 al—alle

1028 of (2)—omitted

1029 b[i]en—byen

owen—owne

1030 byweyleþ—bewayleth

don—MS. done, C. don

1031 liueþ—leueth

1033 witle—wyt

women—wymmen

1034 shortly—shortely

1035 lyke—lik

welle—wel

1036 hir life—this lyf

1037 maat—maad

1038 whiche—weche

1039 amenused—amenysseed

seyñ—(MS. seyne) seyn

1041 lyknesse—lykenesse

witte—wyt

1042 and (1)—or

eldefadir—eldyr fadyr

siþen—syn

1043 folke—folk

1044 art þou þou;—arthow

yif



¶ But zitte ben þer þinges dwellyng to þe wardes þat no man douteþ þat þei ne ben more derworþe to þe þen þine owen lijf. ¶ And forþi drie þi teres for zitte nys nat eueriche fortune al hateful to þe warde. ne ouer greet tempest haþ nat zit fallen vpon þe. whan þat þin ancras cliue fast[e] þat neiþer wole suffre þe comfört of þis tyme present. ne þe hope of tyme comynge to passen ne to fallen. ¶ And I preie quod I þat fast[e] mot[en] þei holden. ¶ For whiles þat þei halden. how so euere þat þinges ben. I shal wel fleten furþe and eschafen. ¶ But þou mayst wel seen how greet[e] apparailes and aray þat me lakkeþ þat ben passed away fro me. ¶ I haue sumwhat auanced and forþered þe quod she. if þat þou anoie nat or forþenke nat of al þi fortune. As who seiþ. ¶ I haue somewhat comforted þe so þat þou tempest nat þe þus wiþ al þi fortune. syn þou hast zit þi best[e] þinges. ¶ But I may nat suffre þin delices. þat pleinst so wepyng. and anguissous for þat oþer lakkeþ somewhat to þi welefulnesse. ¶ For what man is so sad or of so perfit welefulnesse. þat he ne stryueþ or pleyneþ on some half azeine þe qualitee of his estat. ¶ For whi ful anguissous þing is þe condicioun of mans goodes. ¶ For eyþer it comeþ al to gidre to a wyzt. or ellys it lasteþ not perpetuely. ¶ For som man haþ grete rychesse. but he is ashamed of hys vngentil lynage. and som man is renowned of noblesse of kynrede. but he is enclosed in so grete angre for nede of þinges. þat hym were leuer þat he were vnknowe. and som man habundeþ boþe in rychesse and noblesse. but zit he bywaileþ hys chast[e]

most happy in the possession of blessings which all men value more than life. Dry up thy tears, thou hast still present comfort and hope of future felicity.

1050

B. I hope these will never fail me.

1054

But do you not see how low I am fallen?

P. I should think that I had made progress if you did not repine so at your fate.

It grieves me to hear you complain while you possess so many comforts.

1062

Every one, however happy, has something to complain of.

1065

The condition of human enjoyment is anxious; for either it comes not all at once, or makes no long stay when it does come.

One man is very wealthy, but his birth is obscure.

Another is conspicuous for nobility of descent, but is surrounded by indigence.

A third is blest with both ad-

1045 *But zitte*—for yit  
*dwellyng*—dwellyd  
*wardes*—ward  
1046 *þat*—than  
*derworþe*—derworthe  
*ben þine*—than thin  
1047 *zitte*—yit  
1049 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*þin*—þhyne  
1050 *cliue fast[e]* — cleuen  
faste  
*wole suffre*—wolen suffren

1052 *fallen*—faylen  
1052 *fast[e] mot[en]* — faste  
moten  
1053 *holden*—halden  
1054 *furþe*—forth  
1055 *mayst*—mayste  
*greet[e]*—grete  
1058 *forþenke*—forthinke  
1061 *best[e]*—beste  
*suffre þin*—suffren thi  
1063 *oþer*—ther  
1064 *perfit*—parfyt

1065 *or*—and  
*some half azeine* — som  
halue ayen  
1067 *mans*—mannes  
*comeþ al*—comth nat al  
1068 *lasteþ*—last  
*perpetuely*—perpetuei  
1069 *rychesse*—Rychesses  
1070 *renomed*—renowned  
1072 *angre for*—Angwysse  
*leuer*—leuere [of  
1074 *chast[e]*—caste



vantages, but is unmarried.  
This man is happy in a wife, but is childless, while that other man has the joy of children, but is mortified by their evil ways.  
Thus we see that no man can agree easily with the state of his fortune.

lijf. for he haþ no wijf. ¶ and som man is wel *and* selyly maried but he haþ no children. *and* norissheþ his ricchesse to þe heires of straunge folk. ¶ And som man is gladded wiþ children. but he wepiþ ful sory for þe trespas of his son or of his douȝtir. ¶ and for þis þer accordeþ no wyȝt lyȝtly to þe condicioun of his fortune. for alwey to euery man þere is *in* mest somewhat

1082 þat vnassaieþ he ne wot not or ellys he dredieþ þat he haþ assaied. ¶ *And* adde þis also þat euery weleful man haþ a wel delicat felyng. ¶ So þat but yif alle þinges fallen at hys owen wille for he impacient or is nat vsed to han none aduersitee. an-oone he is þrowe

The senses of the happy are refined and delicate, and they are impatient if anything is untoward.

The happiness of the most fortunate depends on trifles.

1089 blisfulnesse fro hem þat ben most fortunat. ¶ How many men trowest þou wolde demen hem self to ben almost in heuene yif þei myȝten atteyne to þe leest[e] *partie* of þe remenaunt of þi fortune. ¶ þis same place þat þou clepist exil is contre to hem þat enhabiten here. *and* forþi. Noþing wrecched. but whan þou wenest it ¶ As who seiþ. þouȝ þi self ne no wyȝt ellys nys no wrecche but whan he wenep hym self a

How many would think themselves in heaven if they had only a part of the remnant of thy fortune!  
Thy miseries proceed from the thought that thou art miserable.  
Every lot may be happy to the man who bears his condition with equanimity and courage.

1097 wrecche by reputacioun of his corage.

## CONTRAQUE.

1098 **A**nd aȝeinwarde al fortune is blisful to a man by þe agreablete or by þe egalite of hym þat suffreþ it.

When patience is lost then a change of state is desired.

¶ What man is pat. þat is so weleful þat nolde chaungen his estat whan he haþ lorn pacience. þe swetnesse of

1102 mannes welefulnesse is yspranid wiþ many[e] bitternesse.

1075, 1076 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
1076 *maried*—ymaryed  
*his*—hise  
1077 *ricchesse*—Rychesses  
*heires*—cyres  
*folk*—foolkys  
1080 *þer*—þer ne  
1081 *mest*—omitted  
1082 *vnassaieþ*—vnassaied  
*wot*—MS. wote, C. wot

1083, 1084 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
1084 *wel*—ful  
1085 *fallen*—byfalle  
*wille*—wyl  
1086 *none*—non  
*an-oone*—Anon  
*þrowe*—throwen  
1087 *adoüne*—adoun  
1090 *wolde*—wolden  
1095 *it*—hyt

1095 *who*—ho  
1096 *no*—a  
1098 *aȝeinwarde al*—aȝeinward alle  
1099 *it*—hyt  
1101 *whan*—what  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
*lorn*—MS. lorne, C. lost  
1102 *yspranid*—spraynyd  
*bitternesse*—beternesses

þe whiche welefulnesse al þouȝ it seme swete *and* ioyeful to hym þat vseþ it. ȝit may it not be wiþ-holden þat it ne goþ away whan it wol. ¶ þan is it wel sen how wrecched is þe blisfulnesse of mortel þinges. þat neiþer it dwelliþ perpetuel wiþ hem þat euery fortune receyuen agreablyly or egaly. ¶ Ne it ne deliteþ not in al. to hem þat ben anguissous. ¶ O ye mortel folkes what seke \*ȝe þan blisfulnesse oute of ȝoure self. whiche þat is put in ȝoure self. *Error and folie confoundep* ȝow ¶ I shal shewe þe shortly. þe poynt of souereyne blisfulnesse. Is þer any þing to þe more *precious* þan þi self ¶ þou wilt answeze nay. ¶ þan if it so be þat þou art myȝty ouer þi self þat is to seyn by tranquillitee of þi soule. þan hast þou þing in þi power þat þou noldest neuer lesen. ne fortune may nat by-nyme it þe. *and* þat þou mayst knowe þat blisfulnesse [ne] may nat standen in þinges þat ben fortunous *and* temperel. ¶ Now vndirstonde *and* gadir it to gidir þus yif blisfulnesse be þe souereyne goode of nature þat liueþ by resoun ¶ Ne þilke þing nis nat souereyne goode þat may be taken away in any wyse. for more worþi þing *and* more digne is þilke þing þat may nat be taken away. ¶ þan shewiþ it wele þat þe vnstablenesse of fortune may nat attayne to receyue verray blisfulnes. ¶ And ȝit more ouer. ¶ What man þat þis toumblyng welefulnesse leediþ. eiper he woot þat [it] is changeable. or ellis he woot it nat. ¶ And yif he woot it not. what blisful fortune may þer be in þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce. and yif he woot þat it is changeable. he mot alwey ben adrad þat he ne lese þat þing. þat he ne douteþ nat but þat he may leesen

How much is human felicity embittered!

It will not stay with those that endure their lot with equanimity, nor bring comfort to anxious minds.

1109

Why then, O [\* fol. 11 b.] mortals, do ye seek abroad for that felicity which is to be found within yourselves? Nothing is more precious than thyself.

If thou hast command over thyself, Fortune cannot deprive thee of it.

1117

Happiness does not consist in things transitory.

1121

If happiness be the supreme good of nature, then that thing cannot be it which can be withdrawn from us.

Instability of fortune is not susceptible of true happiness.

He who is led by fading felicity, either knows that it is changeable or does not know it.

If he knows it not, what happiness has he in the blindness of his ignorance?

If he knows it is fleeting he must be afraid of losing

1104 *hym*--hem  
*it*--hyt  
*be*--ben  
1105 *goþ*--MS. geþe  
*wol*--woole  
*sen*--MS. sene  
1107 *dwelliþ*--dureth  
1109 *folkes*--folke  
1110 *oute*--owt

1112 *shortly*--shortely  
1114 *wilt*--MS. wilte, C. wolt  
*if*--yif  
1117 *by-nyme*--be-neme  
1118 *blisfulnesse* [ne] --  
blyssefulnesse ne  
1120 *to gidir*--to gidere  
1121, 1122 *souereyne goode*--  
souereyn good

1125 *wel*--wel  
1126 *receyue*--resseyuen  
1129 [*it*]-from C.  
*it*--hyt  
1130 *be*--ben  
1131 *blyndenesse* -- blynd-  
nesse

it, and this fear  
will not suffer  
him to be happy.

1136 it. ¶ As whoo seiþ he mot ben alwey agast lest he  
leese þat he wot wel he may leese. ¶ For whiche þe  
continuel drede þat he haþ ne suffriþ hym nat to ben  
weleful. ¶ Or ellys yif he leese it he wene to be  
dispised *and* forleten hit. ¶ Certis eke þat is a ful  
lytel goode þat is born wiþ euene hert[e] whan it is  
1140 loost. ¶ þat is to seyne þat men don no more force.

Since thou art  
convinced of the  
soul's im-  
mortality, thou  
canst not doubt  
that if death puts  
an end to human  
felicity, that all  
men when they  
die, are plunged  
into the depths of  
misery.

of þe lost þan of þe hauynge. ¶ And for as myche as  
þou pi self art he to whom it haþ ben shewid *and* proued  
by ful many[e] demonstraciouns. as I woot wel þat þe  
soules of men ne mowen nat dien in no wise. and eke  
syn it is clere. *and* certeyne þat fortunous welefulnesse  
endiþ by þe deef of þe body. ¶ It may nat ben douted

1147 þat yif þat deef may take away blysfulnesse þat al þe  
kynde of mortal þingus ne descendip in to wrecched-  
nesse by þe ende of þe deef. ¶ And syn we knowen  
wel þat many a man haþ souzt þe fruit of blisfulnesse  
nat only wiþ suffryng of deef. but eke wiþ suffryng of  
peynes *and* tourmentes. how myzt[e] þan þis present  
lijf make men blisful. syn þat whanne þilke self[e]  
lijf is endid. it ne makeþ folk no wrecches.

But we know that  
many have  
sought to obtain  
felicity,  
by undergoing  
not only death,  
but pains and  
torments.

How then can  
this present life  
make men truly  
happy, since  
when it is ended  
they do not be-  
come miserable?

\* MS. ualet.

QUISQUIS UOLET \* PERHENNEM CAUTUS.

[The ferthe  
metur.]

He who would  
have a stable and  
lasting seat must  
not build upon  
lofty hills; nor  
upon the sands,  
if he would escape  
the violence of  
winds and waves.

1160 What maner man stable *and* war þat wil founden hym  
a perdurable sete *and* ne wil not be cast doune  
wiþ þe loude blastes of þe wynde Eurus. *and* wil dispise  
þe see manassyng wiþ floodes ¶ Lat hym eschewe to  
bilde on þe cop of þe mountayngne. or in þe moyste  
sandis. ¶ For þe fel[le] wynde auster tourmentep þe cop  
of þe mountayngne wiþ alle his strengþes. ¶ *and* þe

1134 *it*—hyt  
*seiþ*—MS. *seibe*, C. *seyth*  
1135 *wot*—MS. *wote*, C. *wot*  
*leese* (2)—leese it  
*whiche*—which  
1136 *haþ*—MS. *habe*  
1137 *ellys*—omitted  
*wene*—weneth  
1138 *hit*—omitted  
1139 *goode*—good  
*born*—MS. *borne*, C. *born*  
*hert[e]*—herte

1140 *seyne*—seyn  
*don*—MS. *done*, C. *do*  
*force*—fors  
1142 *haþ*—MS. *habe*  
1143 *many[e]*—manye  
1144 *mowen*—mowe  
*dien*—deyen  
1145 *clere*—cleer  
*certeyne*—certeyn  
1147 *al*—alle  
1150 *haþ*—MS. *habe*  
*fruit*—frut

1152 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
1153 *make*—maken  
*self[e]*—selue  
1155, 1156, 1157 *wil*—wole  
1156 *be cast*—MS. *be caste*,  
C. *ben cast*  
1157 *wynde*—wynd  
1158 *eschewe*—eschewen  
1160 *fel[le]*—felle  
1161 *his*—hise



lowe see sandes refuse to beren þe heuy wey3te. *and* 1162

forþi yif þou wolt flee þe perilous auenture þat is to  
seine of þe worlde ¶ Hauē mynde certeynly to ficchyn  
þi house of a myrie site in a lowe stoonē. ¶ For al  
þou3 þe wynde troubling þe see þondre wiþ ouer-  
þrowynges ¶ þou þat art put in quiete *and* welful by  
strengþe of þi palys shalt leden a cleer age. scornynge  
þe wodenesses and þe Ires of þe eir.

If thou wilt flee  
perilous fortune,  
lay thy founda-  
tion upon the  
firmer stone, so  
that thou mayst  
grow old in thy  
stronghold.

1169

## SET CUM RACIONUM IAM IN TE.

**B**ut for as moche as þe norýssinges of my resouns [The fyfthe prose.]

descenden now in to þe. I trowe it were tyme to  
vsen a litel strengere medicynes. ¶ Now vnderstonde  
here al were it so þat þe 3iftis of fortune nar[e] nat  
brutel ne transitorie. what is þer in hem þat may be  
þine \*in any tyme. or ellis þat it nys foule if þat it be  
considered *and* lokid perfitely. ¶ Richesse ben þei  
precious by þe nature of hem self. or ellys by þe  
nature of þe. What is most worþi of rychesse. is it  
nat golde or myzt of moneye assembled. ¶ Certis  
þilke golde *and* þilke moneye shineþ *and* 3eueþ better  
renoun to hem þat dispenden it. þen to þilke folke þat  
mokeren it. For auarice makeþ alwey mokeres to be  
hated. *and* largesse makeþ folke clere of renoun  
¶ For syn þat swiche þing as is transfered from o  
man to an oþer ne may nat dwellen wiþ no man.

It is now time to  
use stronger me-  
dicines, since  
lighter remedies  
have taken effect.  
What is there in  
the gifts of For-  
tune that is not  
vile and despici-  
able?  
[\* fol. 12.]

1176

Are riches  
precious in them-  
selves, or in men's  
estimation?

What is most  
precious in them,  
quantity or  
quality?

Bounty is more  
glorious than  
niggardliness.

Avarice is always  
hateful, while  
liberality is  
praise-worthy.

1185

Certis þan is þilke moneye precious. whan it is trans-  
lated in to oþer folk. *and* styntep to ben had by  
vsage of large 3euyng of hym þat haþ 3euen it. *and*  
also yif al þe moneye þat is ouer-al in þe world were

Money cannot be  
more precious  
than when it is  
dispensed liber-  
ally to others.

If one man's cof-  
fers contained all

1162 *lowe*—lavse  
*see*—omitted

*refuse*—refusen  
*wey3te*—wyhte

1163 *flee*—fleen

1164 *seine*—seyne

1165 *þi*—thin

*lowe stoonē*—lowh stoon

1167 *welful*—wefeful

1169 *wodenesses* — wood-

nesses

1172 *strenger*—strengere

*vnderstonde*—vnderstond

1173 *nar[e]*—ne weere

1174 *be þine*—ben thyn

1175 *foule*—fowl

1176 *Richesse*—Rychessis

1178 *rychesse*—rychesses

1179, 1180 *golde*—gold

1180 *better*—betere

1181 *þen*—thanne

1182 *mokeres*—mokereres

1183 *folke clere*—folk cler

1184 *swiche*—swich

*from*—fram

1187 *styntep*—stenteth

1188 *haþ*—MS. haþe

1189 *world*—worlde



the money in the world, every one else would be in want of it.

1192

Riches cannot be dispensed without diminution.

1195

O the poverty of riches, that cannot be enjoyed by many at the same time, nor can be possessed by one without impoverishing others !

1200

The beauty of precious stones consists only in their brightness, wherefore I marvel that men admire that which is motionless, lifeless, and irrational.

1207

Precious stones are indeed the workmanship of the Creator, but their beauty is infinitely below the excellency of man's nature.

1213

Doth the beauty of the field delight thee ?

*B.* Why should it not ? for it is a beautiful part of a beautiful whole.

Hence, we admire the face of the sea, the heavens,

gadered towar[d] o man. it sholde maken al oþer men to ben nedys as of þat. ¶ And certys a voys al hool

þat is to seyn wiþ-oute amenusynge fulfilleþ to gyder þe heryng of myche folke. but Certys þoure rycchesse ne mowen nat passen vnto myche folk wiþ-oute amen-

ussyng ¶ And whan þei ben apassed. nedys þei maken hem pore þat forgon þe rycchesses. ¶ O streite *and* nedys clepe I þise rycchesses. syn þat many folke [ne] may nat han it al. ne al may it nat comen to on man wiþ-oute pouerte of al oþer folke. ¶ And þe shynyng

of gemmes þat I clepe precieuse stones. draweþ it nat þe eyen of folk in to hem warde. þat is to seyne for þe beaute. ¶ For certys yif þer were beaute or bounte in shynyng of stones. þilke clerenesse is of þe stones hem self. *and* nat of men. ¶ For whiche I wondre gretly þat men merueilen on swiche þinges. ¶ For whi what þing is it þat yif it wanteþ moeuyng *and*

ioynture of soule *and* body þat by ryzt myzt[e] semen a faire creature to hym þat haþ a soule of resoun.

¶ For al be it so þat gemmes drawn to hem self a litel of þe laste beaute of þe worlde. þoruþ þe entent of hir creatour *and* þoruþ þe distinccioun of hem self. zit for as myche as þei ben put vndir þoure excellence.

1213 þei han not desserued by no weye þat þe shullen merueylen on hem. ¶ *And* þe beaute of feeldes deliteþ

it nat mychel vnto þow. *Boyce.* ¶ Whi sholde it nat deliten vs. syn þat it is a ryzt fayr porcioun of þe ryzt fair werk. þat is to seyn of þis worlde. ¶ *And* ryzt

so ben we gladed somtyme of þe face of þe see whan it is clere. *And* also merueylen we on þe heuene *and*

1190 *al*—alle1191 *al hool*—omitted1193 *myche folke*—moche folke*rychesses*—rychesses1194 *myche*—moche1196 *forgon*—MS. forgone1197 *þise*—this*rychesses*—rychesse

[ne]—from C.

1198 *on*—o1199 *wiþ-oute*—with-owten1199 *al*—alle*folke*—folke1200 *precieuse*—presyous1201 *in*—omitted*ward*—ward*seyne*—seyn1202 *beaute* (1)—beautes*For*—but1203 *in*—in the1204 *whiche*—which1207 *ioynture*—ioyngture1208 *faire*—fayr1208 *hap*—MS. hape1210 *laste*—last*worlde*—world1212 *myche*—mochel1213 *desserued*—MS. des-

seyued, C. desseruyd

*weye*—wey*shullen*—sholden1215 *mychel*—mochel1217 *fair werk*—fayre werke*worlde*—world1219 *clere*—cler

on þe sterres. *and* on þe sonne. *and* on þe mone. *Philosophie.* ¶ Apperteineþ quod she any of pilke þinges to þe. whi darst þou glorifie þe in þe shynynge of any swiche þinges. Art þou distingwed *and* embelised by þe spryngyng floures of þe first somer sesoun. or swellip þi plente in fruytes of somer. whi art þou rauyshed wip ydel ioies. why embracest þou straunge goodes as þei weren þine. Fortune shal neuer maken þat swiche þinges ben þine þat nature of þinges maked foreyne fro þe. ¶ Syche is þat wip-outen doute þe fruytes of þe erþe owen to ben on þe norssinge of bestes. ¶ And if þou wilt fulfille þi nede after þat it suffiseþ to nature þan is it no nede þat þou seke after þe superfluite of fortune. ¶ For wip ful fewe þinges *and with* ful lytel þing nature halt hire appaied. *and* yif þou wilt achoken þe fulfilling of nature wip superfluites ¶ Certys pilke þinges þat þou wilt þresten or pouren in to nature shullen ben vnicyeful to þe or ellis anoies. ¶ Wenest þou eke þat it be a fair þinge to shine wip dyuerse cloþing. of whiche cloþing yif þe beaute be agreable to loken vpon. I wol merueylen on þe nature of þe matere of pilke cloþes. or ellys on þe werkeman þat wrouzt[e] hem. but al so a longe route of meyne. makip þat a blisful \*man. þe whiche seruauntes yif þei ben viciouſ of condiciouns it is a greet charge *and* a destruccioun to þe house. *and* a greet enmye to þe lorde hym self ¶ *And* yif þei ben goode men how shal straung[e] or foreyne goodenes ben put in þe noumbre of þi rycchesse. so þat by alle þise forseide þinges. it is clerly shewed þat neuer none of pilke þinges þat þou accountedest for þin goodes nas nat þi goode. ¶ In þe whiche þinges yif þer be no beaute to ben desired.

as well as the sun, moon, and stars. P. Do these things concern thee? darest thou glory in them?

1223

Do the flowers adorn you with their variety? Why embracest thou things wherein thou hast no property?

Fortune can never make that thine which the nature of things forbids to be so.

The fruits of the earth are designed for the support of beasts.

If you seek only the necessities of nature, the affluence of Fortune will be useless.

Nature is content with a little, and superfluity will be both disagreeable and hurtful.

1236

Does it add to a man's worth to shine in variety of costly clothing? The things really to be admired are the beauty of the stuff or the workmanship of it.

Doth a great retinue make thee happy?

If thy servants be vicious, they are

[\* fol. 12 b.]

a great burden to the house, and pernicious enemies to the master of it.

If they be good, why should the probity of others be put to thy account?

Upon the whole, then, none of those enjoyments which thou didst consider as thy own did ever properly belong to thee.

1222 darst þou glorifte —  
darsthow gloryfyen  
1225 in—in the  
1229 Syche—Soth  
1230 on—to  
1231, 1235, 1237 will—wolt

1238 shullen—shollen  
1239 fair—fayre  
1240 whiche—which  
1242 werkeman—werkman  
1246 house—hows  
lorde—lord

1248 goodenes—goodnesse  
1250 shewed—I-shewyd  
none—oon  
1251 þin—thine  
goode—good

If they be not desirable, why shouldst thou grieve for the loss of them?

If they are fair by nature, what is that to thee? They would be equally agreeable whether thine or not.

They are not to be reckoned precious because they are counted amongst thy goods, but because they seemed so before thou didst desire to possess them.

What, then, is it we so clamorously demand of Fortune?

Is it to drive away indigence by abundance?

But the very reverse of this happens, for there is need of many helps to keep a variety of valuable goods. 1268

They want most things who have the most.

They want the fewest who measure their abundance by the necessities of nature, and not by the superfluity of their desires.

Is there no good planted within ourselves, that we are obliged to go abroad to seek it?

Are things so changed and inverted, that god-like man should think that he has no other worth but what he derives from the possession of inanimate objects? Inferior things are satisfied with their own endowments, while man (the image of God) seeks to adorn his nature

whi sholdest þou be sory yif þou leese hem. or whi sholdest þou reioysen þe to holden hem. ¶ For if þei ben fair of hire owen kynde. what apperteneþ þat to þe. for as wel sholde þei han ben faire by hem self. þouþ þei weren *departid* from alle þin rycchesse. ¶ For why faire ne *precious* ne weren þei nat. for þat þei comen amonges þi rycchesse. but for þei semeden fair *and precious*. þefore þou haddest leuer rekene hem amonges þi rycchesse. but what desirest þou of fortune wiþ so greet a noyse *and* wiþ so greet a fare ¶ I trowe þou seke to dryue away nede wiþ habundaunce of þinges. ¶ But certys it turneþ to 3ow al in þe contrarie. for whi certys it nedieþ of ful many[e] helpynges to kepen þe dyuersite of *precious* ostelmentz. and soþe it is þat of many[e] þinges han þei nede þat many[e] þinges han. *and* aþeyneward of litel nedieþ hem þat mesuren hir fille after þe nede of kynde *and* nat after þe outrage of couetyse ¶ Is it þan so þat ye men ne han no *propre* goode. I-set in 3ow. For whiche 3e moten seken outwardes 3oure goodes in foreine *and* subgit þinges. ¶ So is þan þe *condicioun* of þinges turned vpso down. þat a man þat is a *de-vyne* beest by merit of hys resoun. þinkeþ þat hym self nys neyþer fair ne noble. but if it be þoruþ possessioun of ostelmentes. þat ne han no soules. ¶ And certys al oþer þinges ben appaied of hire owen beautes. but 3e men þat ben semblable to god by 3oure resonable þouþt desiren to apparaille 3oure excellent kynde of þe lowest[e] þinges. ne 3e ne vnderstonde nat how gret a wrong 3e don to 3oure creatour. for he wolde þat man kynde were moost worþi *and* noble of

1255 *fair—fayre*

*hire owen*—hyr owne

1256 *sholde*—sholden

*self*—selue

1257 *þin rycchesse*—thyne

*rychesses*

1259 *amonges*—amonge

1259, 1261 *rychesses*—Rych-

esses

1259 *fair—fayre*

1260 *leuer rekene*—leuere

*rekne*

1262 *greet* (2)—grete

1265, 1267 *many[e]*—manye

1267 *soþe*—soth

1272 *outwardes*—owtward

1276 *fair—fayre*

*if—yif*

1278 *hire owen*—hir owne

1281 *ne* (2)—omitted

*vnderstonde*—vndyrstond-

yn

1282 *gret*—MS. grete, C. gret



any oþer erþely þinges. and 3e þresten adoun 3oure dignitees by-neþen þe lowest[e] þinges. ¶ For if þat al þe good of euery þing be more preciouser þan is þilk þing whos þat þe good is. syn 3e demen þat þe foulest[e] þinges ben 3oure goodes. þanne summytten 3e and putten 3oure self vndir þo foulest[e] þinges by 3oure estimacioun. ¶ And certis þis bitidiþ nat wip out 3oure desert. For certys swiche is þe condicioun of al man kynde þat oonly whan it haþ knowyng of it self. þan passeþ it in noblesse alle oþer þinges. and whan it forletip þe knowyng of it self. þan it is brouzt byneþen alle beestes. ¶ For-why alle oþer [leuyng] beestes han of kynde to knowe not hem self. but whan þat men leten þe knowyng of hem self. it comeþ hem of vice. but how brode sheweþ þe error and þe folie of 3ow men þat wenen þat ony þing may ben apparailled wip straunge apparaillement; ¶ but for-soþe þat may nat be don. for yif a wyzt shyneþ wip þinges þat ben put to hym. as þus. yif þilke þinges shynen wip whiche a man is apparailled. ¶ Certis þilke þinges ben commendid and preised wip whiche he is apparailled. ¶ But napeles þe þing þat is couered and wrapped vndir þat dwelleþ in his filþe. and I denye þat þilke þing be good þat anoyeþ hym þat haþ it. ¶ Gabbe I of þis. þou wolt seye nay. ¶ Certys rycchesse han anoyed ful ofte hem þat han þe rycchesse. ¶ Syn þat euery wicked shrew and for hys wickednesse þe more gredy aftir oþer folkes rycchesse wher so euer it be in any place. be it golde or

with things infinitely below him, not understanding how much he dishonours his Maker. God intended man to excel all earthly creatures, yet you debase your dignity and prerogative below the lowest beings. In placing your happiness in despicable trifles, you acknowledge yourselves of less value than these trifles, and well do you merit to be so esteemed. Man only excels other creatures when he knows himself. When he ceases to do so, he sinks below beasts.

1297

Ignorance is natural to beasts, but in men it is unnatural and criminal. How weak an error is it to believe that anything foreign to your nature can be an ornament to it. If a thing appear beautiful on account of its external embellishments, we admire and praise those embellishments alone. The thing covered still continues in its natural impurity. I deny that to be a good which is hurtful to its owner. Am I deceived in this? You will say no; for riches have often hurt their possessors. Every wicked man desires

1284 oþer erþely — oothre  
wordly  
þresten—threste  
1285 by-neþen—by-nethe  
if—yif  
\*1286 good—MS. goode, C.  
good  
þing—thinge  
preciouser—presyos  
þilk þing—þilke thinge  
1287 þe (2)—tho  
1288 summytten—submitten  
1289 self—seluen

1289 foulest[e]—fowleste  
1290 bitidiþ—tydeth  
1291 out—owte  
desert—desertes  
1292 al—alle  
1293 self—selue  
1294 it is—is it  
1296 [leuyng]—from C.  
hem—hym  
1297 þat—omitted  
1298 comeþ—comth  
1299 þing—thinge  
1302 put—MS. putte, C. put

1303 whiche—which  
1306 filþe—felthe  
1307 þing—thinge  
good—MS. goode, C. good  
1308 hab—MS. hape  
1309 rycchesse—Rychesses  
þe—tho  
1310 rycchesse—Rychesses  
shrew—shrewe  
1311 rycchesse—rychesses  
1312 golde—gold



[\* fol. 13.]  
another's wealth,  
and esteems him  
alone happy who  
is in possession  
of riches.  
You, therefore,  
who now so much  
dread the instru-  
ments of assassin-  
ation, if you had  
been born a poor  
wayfaring man,  
might, with an  
empty purse,  
have sung in the  
face of robbers.  
O the transcen-  
dent felicity of  
riches! No  
sooner have you  
obtained them,  
than you cease to  
be secure.

precious stones. *and* wenip̄ hym \*only most worpī þat  
haþ hem ¶ þou þan þat so besy dredest now þe swerde  
*and* þe spere. yif þou haddest entred in þe paþe of þis  
lijf a voide wayfaryng man. þan woldest þou syng[e]  
byfore þe þeef. ¶ As who seiþ a poure man þat bereþ  
no rycchesse on hym by þe weye. may boldly syng[e]  
byforne þeues. for he haþ nat wher-of to ben robbed.  
¶ O preciouſe *and* ryzt clere is þe blyſfulnesse of  
mortal rycchesse. þat whan þou hast geten it. þan hast  
þou lorn þi syke[r]nesse.

## FELIX IN MIRUM PRIOR ETAS.

[The fyrthe  
metur.]  
Happy was the  
first age of men.  
They were con-  
tented with what  
the faithful earth  
produced.  
With acorns they  
satisfied their  
hunger.  
They knew not  
Hypocras nor  
Hydromel.

They did not dye  
the Serian fleece  
in Tyrian purple.

They slept upon  
the grass, and  
drank of the  
running stream,  
and reclined  
under the shadow  
of the tall pine.  
No man yet  
ploughed the deep,  
nor did the mer-  
chant traffick with  
foreign shores.

Blyſful was þe first age of men. þei helden hem  
apaied wiþ þe metes þat þe trewe erþes brouzten  
furþe. ¶ þei ne destroyed[e] ne desceyued[e] not hem  
self wiþ outrage. ¶ þei weren wont lyztly to slaken  
her hunger at euene wiþ acornes of okes ¶ þei ne  
couþe nat medle þe zift of bacus to þe clere hony.  
þat is to seyn. þei couþe make no piment of clarre.  
ne þei couþe nat medle þe brizt[e] flies of þe contre  
of siriens wiþ þe venym of tirie. þis is to seyne. þei  
couþe nat dien white flies of siriens contre wiþ þe  
blode of a manar shelfyſſhe. þat men fynden in tyrie.  
wiþ whiche blode men deien purper. ¶ þei slepen  
holesom slepes vpon þe gras. and dronken of þe rynn-  
nyng watres. *and* laien vndir þe shadowe of þe heyze  
pyne trees. ¶ Ne no gest ne no straunger [ne] karf  
zit þe heyre see wiþ oores or wiþ shippes. ne þei ne

1314 *haþ*—MS. haþe, C. hat  
*besy*—bysy  
*swerde*—sward  
1315 *paþe*—paath  
1316 *wayfaryng*—wayferynge  
*syng[e]*—syng  
1317 *byfore*—by-forn  
*seiþ*—MS. seiþe, C. seyth  
*poure*—pore  
*bereþ*—berth  
1318 *boldly syng[e]*—boldely  
syng  
1319 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
1320 *precious*—precyos  
*clere*—cler  
1321 *rychesse*—rychesses

1322 *lorn*—MS. lorne, C. lorn  
1324 *erþes*—feeldes  
1325 *furþe*—forth  
*destroyed[e]*—dystroyede  
1327 *her*—hyr  
*at*—MS. as, C. at  
*euene*—euen  
1328 *couþe*—cowde  
*medle*—medly  
*zift*—yifte  
*clere*—cleer  
1329 *couþe*—cowde  
*of*—nor  
1330 *couþe*—cowde  
*brizt[e] flies*—bryhte fleeces  
1331 *siriens*—Seryens

1331 *seyne*—seyn  
1332 *couþe*—cowde  
*dien*—deyen  
*flies*—flezes  
1333 *blode*—blood  
*shelfyſſhe*—shyllefyssh  
1334 *blode*—blood  
1335 *holesom*—holson  
*rynnnyng watres*—rynn-  
nyng watres  
*shadowe*—shadwes  
*heyze*—heyre  
1337 *pyne*—pyn  
*no* (2)—omitted  
[ne]—from C.  
*karf*—karue

hadden seyne zitte none newe strondes to leden mer- 1339  
chaundyse in to dyuerse contres. ¶ þo weren þe cruel  
clariouns ful whist *and* ful stille. ne blode yshed by  
egre hate ne hadde nat deied zit armurers. for wherto  
or whiche woodenesse of enmys wolde first moeuen  
armes. whan þei seien cruel woundes ne none medes  
ben of blood yshad ¶ I wolde þat oure tymes sholde  
turne azeine to þe oolde maneres. ¶ But þe anguissous  
loue of hauyng brennep in folke moore cruely þan þe  
fijr of þe Mountaigne of Ethna þat euer brennep.  
¶ Allas what was he þat first dalf vp þe gobets or  
þe weyztys of gold couered vndir erþe. *and* þe precious  
stones þat wolden han ben hid. he dalf vp precious  
perils. þat is to seyne þat he þat hem first vp dalf. he  
dalf vp a precious peril. for-whi. for þe preciousnesse  
of swyche haþ many man ben in peril.

The warlike trumpet was hushed and still. Bloodshed had not yet arisen through hateful quarrels. Nothing could stimulate their rage to engage in war, when they saw that wounds and scars were the only needs. O that those days would come again! The thirst of wealth torments all; it rages more fiercely than Ætna's fires. Cursed be the wretch who first brought gold to light.

1352

It has since proved perilous to many a man.

## QUID AUTEM DE DIGNITATIBUS ET CETERA.

But what shal I seyne of dignitees *and* of powers.  
þe whiche [ye] men þat neiþer knowen verray dig-  
nitee ne verray power areysen hem as heye as þe  
heuene. þe whiche dignitees *and* powers yif þei come  
to any wicked man þei don [as] greet[e] damages *and*  
distruccioun as doþ þe flamme of þe Mountaigne  
Ethna whan þe flamme wit walwiþ vp ne no deluge  
ne doþ so cruel harmes. ¶ Certys ye remembriþ wel  
as I trowe þat þilke dignitee þat men clepiþ þe em-  
perie of consulers þe whiche þat somtyme was by-  
gynnyng of fredom. ¶ 3oure eldres coueiteden to han  
don a-vey þat dignitee for þe pride of þe conseilers.

[The sixte prose.]  
But why should I discourse of dignities and powers which (though you are ignorant of true honour and real power) you extol to the skies? When they fall to the lot of a wicked man, they produce greater calamities than the flaming eruption of Ætna, or the most impetuous deluge. You remember that your ancestors desired to abolish the Consular government (the commencement of the Roman liberty),

1339 *hadden seyne zitte*—  
hadde seyn yit  
1341 *whist*—hust  
*blode yshed*—blod I-shad  
1343 *whiche woodenesse*—  
whych wodnesse  
1344 *seien*—say  
1346 *turne azeine*—torne  
ayein  
1347 *folke*—folk  
1348 *þe*—omitted

1348 *euere*—ay  
1351 *hid*—MS. hidde, C. hydd  
1352 *seyne*—seyn  
*he* (2)—omitted  
1354 *swyche*—swych thinge  
*haþ*—MS. hape  
*ben*—be  
1355 *seyne*—seye  
1358 *come*—comen  
1359 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
[as] *greet[e]*—as grete

1360 *distruccioun*—destruc-  
ciouns  
*doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
*flamme*—flaambe  
1361 *flamme*—flawmbe  
*wit*—omitted  
1362 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
1363 *clepiþ*—clepyn  
1364 *whiche*—whych  
*somtyme*—whilom  
1366 *for*—MS. of, C. for

because of the pride of the Consuls; as their ancestors before for the same consideration had suppressed the title of King.

¶ And ryzt for þe same pride 3oure eldres byforne þat tyme hadden don away out of þe Citee of rome þe kynges name. þat is to seien. þei nolden haue no lenger no kyng ¶ But now yif so be þat dignitees

1371 *and* powers ben 3euen to goode men. þe whiche þing is ful 3elde. what agreable þinges is þer in þo dignitees. or powers. but only þe goodenes of folk þat vsen hem.

Virtue is not embellished by dignities, but dignities derive honour from virtue. But what is this power, so much celebrated and desired? What are they over whom you exercise authority?

¶ And þerfore it is þus þat honour ne comeþ nat to vertue for cause of dignite. but a3einward. honour comeþ to dignite by cause of vertue. but whiche is 3oure derworþe power þat is so clere *and* so requerable

1378 ¶ O 3e erþelyche bestes considere 3e nat ouer whiche þing þat it semeþ þat 3e han power. ¶ Now yif þou say[e] a mouse amongus \*oþer myse þat chalenged[e] to hymself ward ryzt *and* power ouer alle oþer myse. how gret scorne woldest þou han of hit. ¶ *Glosa.* ¶ So fareþ it by men. þe body haþ power ouer þe body.

If thou sawest a mouse assuming [\* fol. 13 b.] command over other mice, wouldst thou not almost burst with laughter?

For yif þow loke wel vpon þe body of a wyzt what þing shalt þou fynde moore frele þan is mannes kynde. þe whiche ben ful ofte slayn wiþ bytynge of smale flies. or ellys wiþ þe entryng of crepyng wormes in to þe priuetees of mennes bodyes. ¶ But wher shal men fynden any man þat may exercen or haunten any ryzt vpon an oþer man but oonly vpon hys body. or ellys vpon þinges þat ben lower þen þe body. whiche I clepe fortunous possessiouns ¶ Mayst þou euer haue any comaundement ouer a fre corage ¶ Mayst þou remuen fro þe estat of hys propre reste. a þouzt þat is cleuyng to gider in hym self by stedfast resoun. ¶ As somtyme a tiraunt wende to confounde a freman of

1383 What is more feeble than man, to whom the bite of a fly may be the cause of death?

1387 But how can any man obtain dominion over another, unless it be over his body, or, what is inferior to his body,—over his possessions, the gifts of Fortune? Can you ever command a free-born soul? Can you disturb a soul consistent with itself, and knit together by the bond of reason?

¶ O 3e erþelyche bestes considere 3e nat ouer whiche þing þat it semeþ þat 3e han power. ¶ Now yif þou say[e] a mouse amongus \*oþer myse þat chalenged[e] to hymself ward ryzt *and* power ouer alle oþer myse. how gret scorne woldest þou han of hit. ¶ *Glosa.* ¶ So fareþ it by men. þe body haþ power ouer þe body. For yif þow loke wel vpon þe body of a wyzt what þing shalt þou fynde moore frele þan is mannes kynde. þe whiche ben ful ofte slayn wiþ bytynge of smale flies. or ellys wiþ þe entryng of crepyng wormes in to þe priuetees of mennes bodyes. ¶ But wher shal men fynden any man þat may exercen or haunten any ryzt vpon an oþer man but oonly vpon hys body. or ellys vpon þinges þat ben lower þen þe body. whiche I clepe fortunous possessiouns ¶ Mayst þou euer haue any comaundement ouer a fre corage ¶ Mayst þou remuen fro þe estat of hys propre reste. a þouzt þat is cleuyng to gider in hym self by stedfast resoun. ¶ As somtyme a tiraunt wende to confounde a freman of

1368 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
1369 *seien*—seyen  
1370 *lenger*—lengere  
*kyng*—kyng  
1371 *whiche*—which  
1373 *folk*—foolkys  
1374 *comeþ*—comth  
1375, 1376 *vertue*—vertu  
1376 *comeþ*—comth  
*by*—for  
*whiche*—which

1377 *derworþe*—derworthe  
*clere*—cleer  
1378 *whiche*—which  
1379 *han*—MS. hanne, C.  
han  
1380 *say[e]*—saye  
*mouse amongus*—mouse  
amonges  
*myse*—mus;  
1382 *scorne*—scorn  
1383 *haþ*—MS. haþe

1385 *mannes*—man  
1386 *þe*—*slayn*—the  
whiche men wel ofte  
ben slayn  
1388 *mennes bodyes*—mannes  
body  
1391 *lower*—lowere  
*whiche*—the which  
1395 *stedfast*—stidfast  
1396 *somtyme*—whylom



corage ¶ *And wende to constreyne hym by tourment* 1397  
 to maken hym dyscoueren *and acusen folk þat wisten*  
 of a coniuacioun. whiche I clepe a confederacie þat  
 was cast azeins þis tyraunt ¶ *But þis free man boot* Have you not  
read how Anax-  
archus bit off his  
tongue and spat  
it in the face of  
Nicoreon ?  
 of hys owen tunge. *and cast it in þe visage of pilke*  
 woode tyraunte. ¶ *So þat þe tourmentz þat þis*  
 tyraunt wende to han maked matere of cruelte. þis 1403  
 wyse man maked[e it] matere of vertues. ¶ *But what*  
 þing is it þat a man may don to an oþer man. þat he  
 ne may receyue þe same þing of oþer folke *in hym*  
 self. or þus. ¶ *What may a man don to folk. þat folk* 1407  
 ne may don hym þe same. ¶ *I haue herd told of*  
 busirides þat was wont to sleen hys gestes þat her-  
 burghden in hys hous. and he was slayn hym self of  
 ercules þat was hys gest ¶ *Regulus had[de] taken in*  
 bataile many men of affrike. and cast hem in to fet-  
 teres. but sone after he most[e] zine hys handes to  
 ben bounden *with þe cheynes of hem þat he had[de]*  
 somtyme ouercomen. ¶ *Wenest þou þan þat he be*  
 myzty. þat may nat don a þing. þat oþer ne may don  
 hym. þat he doþ to oþer. *and zit more ouer yif it so*  
 were þat þise dignites or poweres hadden any propre  
 or naturel goodnesse in hem self neuer nolden þei  
 comen to shrewes. ¶ *For contrarious þinges ne ben*  
 not wont to ben yfelawshipped togidres. ¶ *Nature re-*  
 fuseþ þat contra[r]ious þinges ben yioigned. ¶ *And so*  
 as I am in certeyne þat ryzt wikked folk han dignitees  
 ofte tymes. þan shewep it wel þat dignitees *and* powers  
 ne ben not goode of hir owen kynde. syn þat þei suf-  
 fren hem self to cleuen or ioynen hem to shrewes.  
 ¶ *And certys þe same þing may most digneliche Iugen*

Have you not  
read how Anax-  
archus bit off his  
tongue and spat  
it in the face of  
Nicoreon ?

What is it that  
one man can do  
to another that  
does not admit of  
retaliation ?

Busiris used to  
kill his guests,  
but at last him-  
self was killed  
by Hercules, his  
guest.

Regulus put his  
Carthaginian  
prisoners in  
chains, but was  
afterwards  
obliged to submit  
to the fetters of  
his enemies.

Is he mighty that  
dares not inflict  
what he would  
upon another for  
fear of a requital ?  
If powers and  
honours were  
intrinsically good,  
they would never  
be attained by  
the wicked.

An union of  
things opposite  
is repugnant to  
nature.

But as wicked  
men do obtain  
the highest  
honours, it is  
clear that honours  
are not in them-  
selves good,  
otherwise they  
would not fall to  
the share of the  
unworthy.

1399 *whiche*—which  
 1401 *owen*—owne  
 1406 *receyue*—resseyuen  
*oþer*—oother  
 1408 *herd told*—MS. herde  
 tolde, C. herd told  
 1409 *hys*—hise  
*herburghden* — herber-  
 weden

1410 *slayn*—sleyn  
 1411 *had[de]*—hadde  
 1413 *most[e]*—moste  
 1414 *bounden*—bownde  
*cheynes* — MS. þeues, C.  
 cheynes  
*had[de]*—hadde  
 1415 *somtyme*—whylom  
 1416 *þat*—þing—that hath

no power to don a thinge  
*oþer*—oother  
 1417 *hym*—in hym  
*doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
*to oþer*—in oother  
 1421 *togidres*—to-gidres  
 1423 *certeyne*—certain  
 1424 *tymes*—tyme  
 1425 *owen*—owue



The worst of men have often the largest share of Fortune's gifts. We judge him to be valiant who has given evidence of his fortitude.

1432 So music maketh a musician, &c.

The nature of everything consists in doing what is peculiar to itself, and it repels what is contrary to it.

Riches cannot restrain avarice. Power cannot make a man master of himself if he is the slave of his lusts.

Dignities conferred upon base men do not make them worthy, but rather expose their want of merit.

Why is it so? 'Tis because you give false names to things. You dignify riches, power, and  
[\* fol. 14.] honours, with names they have no title to.

1450

In fine, the same may be said of all the gifts of Fortune, in which nothing is desirable, nothing of natural good in them, since they are not always allotted to good men, nor make them good to whom they are attached.

and seyen of alle þe ȝiftis of fortune þat most plenteuously comen to shrewes. ¶ Of þe whiche ȝiftys I trowe þat it auȝt[e] ben considered þat no man doutiþ þat he nis strong. in whom he seeþ strengþe. and in whom þat swiftnesse is ¶ Soþe it is þat he is swyfte.

Also musyk makeþ musiciens. and fysik makeþ phisiciens. and rethorik rethoriens. ¶ For whi þe nature of euery þing makip his propretee. ne it is nat entermedled wip þe effectis of contrarious þinges.

¶ And as of wil it chaseþ oute þinges þat to it ben contrarie ¶ But certys rycchesse may nat restreyne auarice vnstaunched ¶ Ne power [ne] makeþ nat a man myȝty ouer hym self. whiche þat vicious lustis holden destreined wip cheins þat ne mowen nat ben vnbounden. and dignitees þat ben ȝeuen to shrewed[e] folk nat oonly ne makip hem nat digne. but it sheweþ raper al openly þat þei ben vnworþi and vndigne.

¶ And whi is it þus. ¶ Certis for ȝe han ioye to clepen þinges wip fals[e] names. þat beren hem al in þe contrarie. þe whiche names ben ful ofte reproued by þe effect of þe same þinges. so þat \*þise ilke rycchesse ne auȝten nat by ryȝt to ben cleped rycchesse. ne whiche power ne auȝt[e] not ben cleped power. ne whiche dignitee ne auȝt[e] nat ben cleped dignitee.

¶ And at þe laste I may conclude þe same þinge of al þe ȝiftes of fortune in whiche þer nis no þing to ben desired. ne þat hap in hym self naturel bounte. ¶ as it is ful wel sene. for neyþer þei ne ioygnen hem nat alwey to goode men. ne maken hem alwey goode to whom þei ben y-ioigned.

1429 *whiche*—which

1430 *auȝt[e]*—owhte

1432 *Soþe*—soth  
*swyfte*—swyft

1435 *is*—nis

1436 *effectis*—effect

1437 *oute*—owt

1441 *ben*—be

1442 *shrewed[e]*—shrewede

1446 *fals[e]*—false

*al*—alle

1447 *whiche*—which

1449 *auȝten*—owhten

*rycchesse*—rychesses

1450 *whiche*—swich

*auȝt[e]*—owhte

1451 *whiche*—swich

*auȝt[e]*—owht

1453 *al*—alle

1454 *hap*—MS. hape

1455 *sene*—I-scene

NOUIMUS QUANTOS DEDERAT.

WE han wel knowen how many greet[e] harmes *and* destrucciouns weren doñ by þe Emperoure Nero.

[The sixte Metur-]  
We know what  
ruin Nero did.  
1459

¶ He letee brenne þe citee of Rome *and* made slen þe *senatours*. and he cruel somtyme slou3 hys broþer. *and* he was maked moyst wiþ þe blood of hys modir. þat is to seyn he let sleen *and* slitten þe body of his modir to seen where he was conceiued. *and* he loked[e] on euery half vpon hir colde dede body. ne no tere ne wette his face. but he was so hard herted þat he myzt[e] ben domesman or Iuge of hire dede beaute. ¶ And 3itte

He burnt Rome,  
he slew the con-  
script fathers,  
murdered his  
brother, and  
spilt his mother's  
blood.

He looked un-  
moved upon his  
mother's corpse,  
and passed judg-  
ment upon her  
beauty.

1467

neuerþeles gouerned[e] þis Nero by Ceptre al þe peoples þat phebus þe sonne may seen comyng from his outerest arysyng til he hidde his bemes vndir þe waves. ¶ þat is to seyne. he gouerned[e] alle þe peoples by Ceptre imperial þat þe sonne goþ aboute from est to west ¶ And

Yet this parricide  
ruled over all  
lands, illumined  
by the sun in his  
diurnal course,  
and controlled  
the frozen regions  
of the pole.

1472

eke þis Nero goueyrende by Ceptre. alle þe peoples þat ben vndir þe colde sterres þat hyzten þe seuene triones. þis is to seyn he gouerned[e] alle þe poeples þat ben vndir

1475

þe partics of þe norþe. ¶ And eke Nero gouerned[e] alle þe poeples þat þe violent wynde Nothus scorchiþ *and* bakiþ þe brennyng sandes by his drie hete. þat

He governed, too,  
the people in the  
torrid zone.

1478

is to seyne. alle þe poeples in þe souþe. [but yit ne myhte nat al his heye power torne the woodnesse of this wykkyd nero / Allas it is greuou fortune it is]. as ofte as wicked swerde is ioyned to cruel venym. þat is to sein. venimous cruelte to lordshipe.

But yet Nero's  
power could not  
tame his ferocious  
mind.

It is a grievous  
thing when  
power strength-  
ens the arm of  
him whose will  
prompts him to  
deeds of cruelty.

1458 greet[e]—grete  
1460 letee—let  
1461 somtyme slou3—whilom  
slow  
1463 let—lette  
1464 where—wher  
1465 half—halue  
1466 myzt[e]—myhte  
1467 hire—hyr  
1468 neuerþeles—nathelus  
gouerned[e]—gouernede

1468 al—alle  
1469 from—fram  
outerest—owtereste  
1470 hidde—hide  
1471 seyne—seyn  
1472 gob—MS. goþe, C. goth  
1473 goueyrende—gouernyd  
1474 triones—tyryones  
1475 gouerned[e]—gouernede  
1476 parties—party  
norþe—north

1476 gouerned[e] — gouern-  
ede  
1477 wynde—wynd  
scorchiþ—scorklith  
1479 seyne—seyn  
souþe—sowth  
1479-81 [but—it is]—MS.  
has: but ne how greuou  
fortune is  
1482 swerde—swerd

[The seunde  
prose.]

B. Thou knowest  
that I did not  
covet mortal and  
transitory things.

I only wished to  
exercise my  
virtue in public  
concerns, lest it  
should grow  
feeble by in-  
activity.

P. A love of  
glory is one of  
those things that  
may captivate  
minds naturally  
great, but not  
yet arrived at  
the perfection of  
virtue.

But consider how  
small and void of  
weight is that  
glory.

Astronomy  
teaches us that  
this globe of earth  
is but a speck  
compared with  
the extent of the  
heavens,  
and is as nothing  
if compared with  
the magnitude  
of the celestial  
sphere.

Ptolemy shows  
that only one-  
fourth of this  
earth is inhabited  
by living crea-  
tures.

Deduct from this  
the space occupied  
by seas, marshes,  
lakes, and deserts,  
and there remains  
but a small pro-  
portion left for the  
abode of man.

1487 *desired[e]*—desyre  
1489 *wex olde*—wax old  
1492 *whiche*—which  
*speke*—spekyn  
1496 *tollen*—MS. tellen, C.  
tollen

1497 *ful[le]*—fulle  
1501 *al prise*—alle prys  
1505 *seye*—seyen  
1507 *wolde*—woldyn  
*alle*—al  
*[ne]*—from C.

1510 *lerned*—ylernd  
1512 *houzte*—thowht  
*myche*—moche  
1513 *[the]*—from C.  
1514 *myche space*—moche  
spaces

## TUM EGO SCIS INQUAM.

**H**Anne seide I þus. þou wost wel þiself þat þe  
couetise of mortal þinges ne hadden neuer lord-  
shipe of me. but I haue wel desired matere of þinges  
to done. as who seip. I desired[e] to han matere of  
gouernaunce ouer comunalites. ¶ For vertue stille ne  
sholde not elden. þat is to seyn. þat list þat or he wex  
1490 olde ¶ His uertue þat lay now ful stille. ne sholde  
nat *perisse* vnexercised in gouernaunce of comune.  
¶ For whiche men myzten speke or writen of his  
goode gouernement. ¶ *Philosophie*. ¶ For soþe *quod*  
she. *and* þat is a þing þat may drawen to gouernaunce  
swiche hertes as ben worþi *and* noble of hir nature.  
but napeles it may nat drawen or tollen swiche hertes as  
ben y-brouzt to þe ful[le] perfeccioun of vertue. þat is  
to seyn couetyse of glorie *and* renoun to han wel  
administred þe comune þinges. or doon goode decertes  
1500 to profit of þe comune. for se now *and* considere how  
litel *and* how voide of al prise is þilke glorie. ¶ Cer-  
teine þing is as þou hast lerned by demonstracioun of  
astronomye þat al þe envyronyng of þe erþe aboute  
ne halt but þe resoun of a prykke at regard of þe gret-  
nesse of heuene. þat is to seye. þat yif þat þer were  
maked comparisoun of þe erþe to þe gretnesse of  
1507 heuene. men wolde Iugen in alle þat erþe [ne] helde  
no space ¶ Of þe whiche litel regioun of þis worlde  
þe ferþe partie is enhabitid wiþ lyuyng beestes þat  
we knowen. as þou hast þi self lerned by tholome þat  
prouith it. ¶ yif þou haddest wiþ drawen *and* abated  
in þi þouzte fro þilke ferþe partie as myche space as þe  
see *and* [the] mareys contenen *and* ouergon *and* as  
myche space as þe regioun of droughte ouerstrecchep.



pat is to seye sandes *and* desertes wel vnneþ sholde 1515

\*þer dwellen a ryzt streite place to þe habitacioun of [\* fol. 14 b.]

men. *and* 3e þan þat ben envired *and* closed wip And do you, who are confined to the least point of this point, think of nothing but of blazing far and wide your name and reputation? What is there great in a glory so circumscribed? 1522

inne þe leest[e] prikke of pilk prikke þenke 3e to manifesten 3oure renoun *and* don 3oure name to ben born forþe. but 3oure glorie þat is so narwe *and* so streyt yprongen in to so litel boundes. how myche conteinþe it in largesse *and* in greet doynge. And also 1522

sette þis þer to þat many a nacioun dyuerse of tonge *and* of maneres. *and* eke of resoun of hir lyuyng ben Even in this contracted circle, there is a great variety of nations, to whom not only the fame of particular men, but even of great cities, cannot extend. 1529

enhabitid in þe cloos of pilke litel habitacle. ¶ To þe whiche naciouns what for difficulte of weyes. *and* what for diuersite of langages. *and* what for defaute of vnusage entercomunyng of marchauandise. nat only þe names of singler men ne may [nat] stretchen. but eke 1529

þe fame of Citees ne may nat stretchen. ¶ At þe last[e] Certis in þe tyme of Marcus tulyus as hym self writeþ in his book þat þe renoun of þe comune of Rome ne hadde nat 3itte passed ne cloumben ouer þe mountaigne þat hyzt Caucasus. *and* 3itte was pilk beyond Mount Caucasus. 1535

tyme come wel wexen *and* gretly redouted of þe parthes. 1535

and eke of oþer folk enhabityng aboute. ¶ Sest þou nat þan how streit *and* how compressed is pilke glorie þat 3e trauailen aboute to shew *and* to multiplie. May þan þe glorie of a singlere Romeyne stretchen pider as þe fame of þe name of Rome may nat clymben ne passen. ¶ And eke sest þou nat þat þe maners of diuerse folk *and* eke hir lawes ben discordaunt amonge hem self. so þat pilke þing þat sommen iugen worþi of preysynge. oþer folk iugen þat it is worþi of torment. ¶ and þer of comeþ þat þou 3 a man delite hym in 1545

How narrow, then, is that glory which you labour to propagate. Shall the glory of a Roman citizen reach those places where the name even of Rome was never heard? Customs and institutions differ in different countries.

What is praise-worthy in one is blame-worthy in another.

1515 *seye*—seyne  
1516 *streite*—streyt  
1517 *þan*—thanne  
1518 *inne*—in

*leest[e]*—leste  
*pilk*—thilke  
*þenke 3e*—thinken ye  
1520 *born forþe*—MS. borne,  
C. born, forth

1520 *narwe*—narwh  
1521 *streyt*—streyte  
*myche*—mochel  
1522 *conteinþe*—coueyteth  
1525 *habitacle*—MS. habit-  
ache, C. habytacule  
1529 [nat]—from C.  
1531 *last[e]*—lasto  
1532 *writeþ*—writ

1533 *hadde*—hadden  
*3itte*—omitted  
1534 *hyzt*—hyhte  
*pilk*—thikke  
1535 *wexen*—waxen  
1536 *Sest þou*—sestow  
1538 *shew*—shewe  
1539 *singlere*—singler  
1545 *comeþ*—comth it



It is not the interest of any man who desires renown to have his name spread through many countries. He ought, therefore, to be satisfied with the glory he has acquired at home. But of how many personages, illustrious in their times, have the memorials been lost through the carelessness and neglect of writers. But writings do not preserve the names of men for ever.

1557 But perhaps you suppose that you shall secure immortality if your names are transmitted to future ages. If you consider the infinite space of eternity you will have no reason to rejoice in this supposition. If a *moment* be compared with 10,000 years, there is a proportion between them, though a very small one. But this number of years, multiplied by whatever sum you please, vanishes when compared with the infinite extent of eternity. There may be comparison between finite things, but none between the infinite and finite. Hence it is, that Fame (however lasting), compared with eternity, will seem absolutely nothing.

preysyng of his renoun. he ne may nat in no wise bryngen furþe ne spreden his name to many manere peoples. ¶ And þefore euery maner man auzte to ben paied of hys glorie þat is puplissed among hys owen neyþbores. ¶ And þilke noble renoun shal be restreyned wip-inne þe boundes of o maner folk but how many a man þat was ful noble in his tyme. haþ þe nededy and wrecched forzetyng of writers put oute of mynde and don away. ¶ Al be it so þat certys þilke writynges profiten litel. þe whiche writynges longe and derke elde doþ awaye boþe hem and eke her autours. but 3e men semen to geten 3ow a perdurablete whan 3e þenke þat in tyme comyng 3oure fame shal lasten. ¶ But napeles yif þou wilt maken comparisoun to þe endeles space of eternite what þing hast þou by whiche þou maist reioysen þe of long lastyng of þi name. ¶ For if þer were makid comparysoun of þe abidyng of a moment to ten þousand wynter. for as myche as boþe þo spaces ben endid. ¶ For 3it haþ þe moment some porcioun of hit al þouz it a litel be. ¶ But napeles þilke self noubre of 3eres. and eke as many 3eres as þer to may be multiplied. ne may nat certys be comparisound to þe perdurablete þat is een[de]les. ¶ For of þinges þat han ende may be mad comparisoun [but of thinges that ben with-owtyn ende to thinges þat han ende may be makid no comparysoun]. ¶ And for þi is it al þouz renoun of as longe tyme as euer þe lyst to þinken were þouz by þe regard of eternite. þat is vnstauncheable and infinit. it ne sholde nat oonly semen litel. but pleinliche ryzt nouzt. ¶ But 3e men certys ne konne

1547 *furþe*—forth  
*manere*—maner  
1543 *þefore*—ther-for  
*auzte*—owhte  
1549 *paied*—apayed  
*hys owen*—hise owne  
1550 *neyþbores*—nesshebours  
*be*—ben  
1552 *haþ*—MS. haþe [put owt]  
1553 *put* (MS. *putte*) oute—

1556 *derke*—derk  
*doþ awaye*—MS. doþe, C.  
doth a-wey  
*her autours*—hir actorros  
1557 *3e*—yow  
*semen*—semetn  
1558 *comyng*—to comyng  
1559 *wilt*—wolt  
1560 *whiche*—which  
1563 *myche*—mochel

1564 *þo*—the  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
*some*—som  
1566 *self*—selue  
1567 *be* (2)—ben  
1568 *een[de]les*—endeles  
1569 *mad*—MS. made, C.  
makid  
[but — comparysoun] —  
1573 *by*—to [from C.]

don no þing aryȝt. but ȝif it be for þe audience of poeple. *and* for ydel rumours. *and* ȝe forsaken þe grete worþinesse of conscience *and* of vertue. *and* ȝe seken ȝoure gerdouns of þe smale wordes of strange folke. ¶ Have now here *and* vnderstonde in þe lyȝtnesse of whiche pride *and* veyne glorie. how a man scorned[e] festiually *and* myrily swiche vanite. somtyme þere was a man þat had[de] assayed wiþ striuyng wordes an oþer man. ¶ þe whiche nat for vsage of verrey vertue. but for proude veyne glorie had[de] taken vpon hym falsly þe name of a philosopher. ¶ þis raper man þat I speke of þouȝt[e] he wolde assay[e] where he þilke were a philosopher or no. þat is to seyne yif he wolde han suffred lyȝtly in pacience þe wronges \*þat weren don vnto hym. ¶ þis feined[e] philosophre took pacience a litel while. *and* whan he hadde receiued wordes of outeage he as in stryuyng aȝeine *and* reioysyng of hym self seide at þe last[e] ryȝt þus. ¶ vnderstondest þou nat þat I am a philosophre. þat oþer man answered[e] aȝein ful bityngly *and* seide. ¶ I had[de] wel vnderstonde[n] [yt]. yif þou haddest holden þi tonge stille. ¶ But what is it to þise noble worþi men. For certys of swyche folk speke .I. þat seken glorie wiþ vertue. what is it quod she. what atteiniþ fame to swiche folk whan þe body is resolued by þe deef. atte þe last[e]. ¶ For yif so be þat men dien in al. þat is to seyne body *and* soule. þe whiche þing oure resoun defendiþ vs to byleuen þanne is þere no glorie in no wyse. For what sholde þilke glorie ben. for he of whom þis glorie is seid to be nis ryȝt nouȝt in no wise. 1605 *and* ȝif þe soule whiche þat haþ in it self science of

But yet you do good from no other view than to have the empty applause of the people, foregoing the pleasures of a good conscience in order to have the insignificant praises of other people.

This silly vanity was once thus ingeniously and pleasantly rallied. A certain man, who had assumed the name of a philosopher through a love of vain-glory, was told by a man of humour that he could prove he was a philosopher by bearing patiently the injuries offered him.

[\* fol. 15.]

1590

After counterfeiting patience for a while, the sophist said to the other, 'You must surely confess that I am a philosopher.'

'I might have believed it,' said the other, 'had you held your tongue.'

What advantage is it to great and worthy men to be extolled after death?

1600

If body and soul die, then there can be no glory; nor can there be when he (to whom it is ascribed) does not exist.

1605

1580 *whiche*—swych  
1581 *scorned[e]*—scornede  
1582 *swiche*—swych  
*somtyme*—whilom  
1583 *had[de]*—hadde  
1584 *whiche*—which  
*proude*—prowd  
1586 *speke*—spak  
1587 *þouȝt[e]*—thowhte

1587 *assay[e]*—assaye  
1588 *seyne*—seyn  
1590 *feined[e]*—feynede  
1592 *aȝeine*—ayein  
1593 *last[e]*—laste  
*vnderstondest þou* — vn-  
dyrston dow  
1594 *answered[e]*—answerde  
1595 *had[de]*—hadde

1596 [yt]—from C.  
1601 *last[e]*—laste  
1602 *seyne*—seyn  
1604 *for* (2)—whan  
1605 *þis*—thilke  
*seid*—MS. seide, C. scyd  
*nouȝt*—nawht  
1606 *haþ*—MS. hape

But if the soul  
is immortal when  
it leaves the body,  
it takes no  
thought of the  
joys of this  
world.

goode werkes vnbounden fro þe prisoun of þe erþe  
wendeþ frely to þe heuene. dispiseþ it nouzt þan alle  
erþely occupaciouns. *and* beyng in heuene reioiseþ þat  
it is exempt from alle erþely þinges [as wo seith /  
1611 thanne rekketh the sowle of no glorye of renown of this  
world].

## QUICUMQUE SOLAM MENTE.

[The 7th Metre.]  
Let him who  
seeks fame, think-  
ing it to be the  
sovereign good,  
look upon the  
broad universe  
and this circum-  
scribed earth;  
and he will then  
despise a glorious  
name limited to  
such a confined  
space.

Who so þat wiþ ouerþrowyng þouzt only sekeþ glorie  
of fame. *and* wenip þat it be souereyne good  
¶ Lete hym loke vpon þe brode shewyng contreys of  
þe heuen. *and* vpon þe streite sete of þis erþe. *and*  
he shal be ashamed of þe eneres of his name. þat may  
nat fulfille þe litel compas of þe erþe. ¶ O what  
coueiten proude folke to listen vpon hire nekkes in

1619

Will splendid  
titles and renown  
prolong a man's  
life?

ydel *and* dedely 3ok of þis worlde. ¶ For al þou3  
[þat] renoune y-spradde passyng to ferne poeples goþ  
by dyuerse tonges. and al þou3 grete houses *and* kyn-

1623

In the grave  
there is no dis-  
tinction between  
high and low.

Where is the good  
Fabricius now?  
Where the noble  
Brutus, or stern  
Cato?

redes shyne wiþ clere titles of honours. 3it napeles  
deep dispiseþ al heye glorie of fame. *and* deep wrappeþ  
to gidre þe heye heuedes *and* þe lowe *and* makeþ egal  
*and* euene þe heyest[e] to þe lowest[e]. ¶ where  
wonen now þe bones of trewe fabricius. what is  
now brutus or stiern Caton þe þinne fame 3it lastyng

1629

Their empty  
names still live,  
but of their  
persons we know  
nothing.

of hir ydel names is markid wiþ a fewe lettres. but  
al þou3 we han knowen þe faire wordes of þe fames of  
hem. it is nat 3euen to knowe hem þat ben dede *and*  
consumpt. Liggip þanne stille al vtterly vnknowable  
ne fame ne makeþ 3ow nat knowe. and yif 3e wene  
to lyuen þe lenger for wynde of 3oure mortal name.

Fame cannot  
make you known.

1635

1608 *nouzt þan*—nat thanne  
1610 *from*—fro  
1610—1612 [*as* — *world*] —  
from C.  
1615 *Lete*—Lat  
*loke*—looken  
1616 *sete*—Cyte  
1617 *be*—ben

1619 *vpon*—vp  
1620 *and dedely*—in the dedly  
1621 *y-spradde*—ysprad  
[*þat*]—from C.  
*ferne*—MS. serue, C. ferne  
*goþ*—MS. goþe, C. goth  
1622 *and* (2)—or  
1623 *shyne*—shynen

1623 *clere*—cler  
1624 *al*—alle  
1626 *heyest[e]*—heyoste  
*lowest[e]*—loweste  
1628 *stiern*—MS. sciern, C.  
stierne  
1632 *consumpt*—consumpte  
1634 *lenger*—longere



here þe departynge of þe body *and* þe soule. ¶ and þe secunde deef he clepþ as here. þe styntyng of þe renoune of fame.\*

It will be effaced by conquering Time, so that death will be doubly victorious.

\* The next three chapters are from the Camb. MS.

[SET NE ME INEXORABILE CONTRA.]

**B**Vt for-as-mochel as thow shalt nat wenen *quod* she þat I bere vntretable batayle ayenis fortune // yit som-tyme it by-falleth þat she desseyuable desserueth to han ryht good thank of men // *And* þat is whan she hire self opneth / *and* whan she descouereth hir frownt / *and* sheweth hir maneres *par-aenture* yit vndirstondesthow nat þat .I. shal seye // it is a wondyr þat .I. desyre to telle / *and* forthi vnnethe may I. vnpleyten my sentence *with* wordes for I. deme þat contraryos fortune profiteth more to men than fortune debonayre // For al-wey whan fortune semeth debonayre than she lyeth falsly in by-hetyng the hope of wefulnessse // but forsothe *contraryos* fortune is alwey sothfast / whan she sheweth hir self vnstable thorw hyr chaungynge // the amyable fortune desseyueth folk / the contrarye fortune techeth // the amyable fortune byndeth *with* the beaute of false goodys the hertes of folk þat vsen hem / the contrarye fortune vnbyndeth hem by þe knowynge of freele wefulnessse // the amyable fortune maysthow sen alwey wyndynge *and* flowynge / *and* euere mysknowynge of hir self // the contrarye fortune is a-tempre *and* restreynynd *and* wys thorw excersyse of hir aduersyte // at the laste amyable fortune *with* hir flaterynge draweth mys wandryng men fro the souereyne good // the contraryos fortune ledith ofte folk ayein to sothfast goodes / *and* haleth hem ayein as *with* an hooke / weenesthow thanne þat thow owhtest to leten this a lytel thing / þat this aspre *and* horrible fortune hath discoueryd to the / the thowhtes of thy trewe frendes // For-why this ilke for-

[The viij prose.]  
'But do not believe,' said Philosophy, 'that I am an implacable enemy to Fortune. This inconstant dame sometimes deserves well of men, when she appears in her true colours. And what I say may perhaps appear paradoxical. That is, that adverse fortune is more beneficial than prosperous fortune.'

1650

The latter lies and deceives us, the former displays her natural inconstancy.

That deceives us, this instructs us; that, by a fallacious show of good, enslaves the mind; this, by the knowledge of her fickleness, frees and absolves it.

The one is wavering and incapable of reflection, the other is staid and wise through experience of adversity.

Lastly, prosperous fortune leads men astray. Adversity teaches them wherein real happiness consists.

It renders us no inconsiderable service in enabling us to recognize our true friends.

1668



1669 tune hath departyd *and* vncoueryd to the bothe the  
certeyn vysages *and* ek the dwtos visages of thy  
felawes // whan she departyd away fro the / she took

1672 away hyr frendes *and* lafte the thyne frendes // now  
whan thou were ryche *and* weleful as the semede / *with*  
how mochel woldesthow han bowht the fulle know-  
ynge of this // þat is to seyn the knowynge of thy  
verray frendes // now pleyne the nat thanne of Rychesse  
.I.-lorn syn thou hast fowndyn the moste presyos kynde  
of Rychesses þat is to seyn thy verray frendes.

At what price  
would you not  
have bought this  
knowledge in  
your prosperity ?

Complain not,  
then, of loss of  
wealth, since  
thou hast found  
infinitely greater  
riches in your  
true friends.

QUOD MUNDUS STABILI FIDE.

[The viij Metur.]  
This world, by  
an invariable  
order, suffers  
change.  
Elements, that by  
nature disagree,  
are restrained by  
concord.

THat þ<sup>e</sup> world *with* stable feith / varieth acordable  
chaungynge // þat the contraryos qualite of elementz  
holden amonge hem self aliaunce perdurable / þat phebus  
the sonne *with* his goldene chariet / bryngeth forth the  
rosene day / þat the mone hath commaundement ouer the

1684 nyhtes // whiche nyhtes hesperus the eue sterre hat browt //  
þat þ<sup>e</sup> se gredey to flowen constreyneth *with* a certeyn ende  
hise floodes / so þat it is nat l[e]ueful to stretche hise

The sea is thus  
kept within its  
proper bounds.

1687 brode termes or bowndes vp-on the erthes // þat is to seyn  
to couere alle the erthe // Al this a-cordaunce of thinges  
is bownden *with* looue / þat gouerneth erthe *and* see / *and*  
hath also commaundementz to the heuenes / *and* yif  
this looue slakede the brydelis / alle thinges þat now

This concord is  
produced by love,  
which governeth  
earth and sea,  
and extends its  
influence to the  
heavens.

If this chain of  
love were broken  
all things would  
be in perpetual  
strife, and the  
world would go  
to ruin.

Love binds  
nations together,  
it ties the nuptial  
knot, and dictates  
binding laws to  
friendship.

Men were truly  
blest if governed  
by this celestial  
love!

louen hem to gederes / wolden maken a batayle contyn-  
uely *and* stryuen to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde /  
the which they now leden in acordable feith by fayre  
moeuynges // this looue halt to gideres poeples Ioygned  
*with* an hooly bond / *and* knytteth sacrement of mar-  
yages of chaste looues // And loue enditeth lawes to  
trewe felawes // O weleful weere mankynde / yif thilke  
loue þat gouerneth heuene gouerned[e] yowre corages /

EXPLICIT LIBER 2<sup>us</sup>.

INCIPIT LIBER 3<sup>us</sup>

IAM CANTUM ILLA FINIERAT.

By this she hadde endid hire songe / whan the swetnesse  
of hire ditee hadde thowr perced me þat was desirous  
of herkninge / and .I. astoned hadde yit streyhte myn  
Eres / þat is to seyn to herkne the bet / what she wolde  
seye // so þat a litel here after .I. seyde thus // O thow  
þat art souereyn comfort of Angwissos corages // So thow  
hast remounted and norysshed me with the weyhte of thy  
sentenses and with delit of thy syngynge // so þat .I. trowe  
nat now þat .I. be vnpariygal to the strokes of fortune / as  
who seyth. I. dar wel now suffren al the assautes of for-  
tune and wel deffende me fro hyr // and tho remedies  
whyche þat thow seydest hire byforn weren ryht sharpe  
Nat oonly þat .I. am nat agrysen of hem now // but .I. de-  
siros of herynge axe gretely to heeren tho remedies //  
than seyde she thus // þat feelede .I. ful wel quod she //  
whan þat thow ententyf and styлле rauysshedest my  
wordes // and .I. abood til þat thow haddest swych habyte  
of thy thought as thow hast now // or elles tyl þat .I.  
my self had[de] maked to the the same habyt / which  
þat is a moore verray thinge // And certes the remenaunt  
of thinges þat ben yit to seye / ben swyche // þat fyrst  
whan men tasten hem they ben bytynge / but whan  
they ben resseyuyd with-inne a whyht than ben they  
swete // but for thow seyst þat thow art so desirous to  
herkne hem // wit[h] how gret brennyng woldesthow  
glowen / yif thow wystem whyder .I. wol leden the //  
whydyre is þat quod .I. // to thilke verray welefulnesse  
quod she // of whyche thyng herte dremeth // but  
for as moche as thy syhte is ocupied and distorbed / by  
Imagynasyon of herthely thynges / thow mayst nat yit  
sen thilke selue welefulnesse // do quod .I. and shewe

[The fyrste prose.]  
Philosophy now  
ended her song.  
I was so charmed  
that I kept a  
listening as if  
she were still  
speaking.

At last I said,  
O sovereign com-  
forter of dejected  
minds, how much  
hast thou re-  
freshed me with  
the energy of thy  
discourse,  
so that I now  
think myself  
almost an equal  
match for For-  
tune and able to  
resist her blows.  
I fear not, there-  
fore, thy reme-  
dies, but earnestly  
desire to hear  
what they are.

1713

P. When I per-  
ceived that, silent  
and attentive, you  
received my  
words, I expected  
to find such a  
state of mind in  
you, or rather, I  
created in you  
such an one.  
What remains to  
be said is of such  
a nature that  
when it is first  
tasted it is  
pungent and un-  
pleasant, but  
when once swal-  
lowed it turns  
sweet, and is  
grateful to the  
stomach.  
But because you  
say you would  
now gladly hear,  
with what desire  
would you burn  
if you could  
imagine whither  
I am going to  
lead you?  
B. Whither is  
that, I pray?  
P. To that true  
felicity, of which  
you seem to have  
but a faint fore-  
taste.

But your sight is clouded with false forms, so that it cannot yet behold this same felicity.

*B.* Show me, I pray, that true happiness without delay.

*P.* I will gladly do so at your desire, but I will first describe that false cause (of happiness), so that you may be better able to comprehend the exact model.

\* Here the Add. MS. begins again.

[The fyrst metur.]  
He who would sow seed must first clear the ground of useless weeds, so that he may reap an abundant harvest. Honey tastes all the sweeter to a palate disgusted by offensive flavours.

The stars shine all the clearer when the southern showery blasts cease to blow.

When Lucifer has chased away the dark night, then Phœbus mounts his gay chariot.

So you, beholding the false felicity, and withdrawing your neck from the yoke of earthly affections, will soon see the sovereign good.

[The 2<sup>d</sup>e prose.]  
Philosophy, with a serious air, and appearing to recollect herself, and to rouse up all her faculties, thus began.

All the cares and desires of men seek one end—happiness.

[\* fol. 15 b.]

me / what is thilke verray welefulnesse / .I. preye the  
with-howte tarynge // þat wole .I. gladly don *quod* she /  
for the cause of the // but .I. wol fyrst marken the by  
wordes / and I wol enformen me to enformen the //  
thilke false cause of blyfulnesse þat thow more know-  
est / so þat whan thow hast fully by-holden thilke false  
goodes and torned thyne eyen to þat oother syde / thow  
mowe knowe the clernesse of verray blyfulnesse //

\*QUI SERERE INGENIUM.

¶ Who so wil sowe a felde plentiuous. lat hym first  
delyuer it of þornes and kerue asondre wiþ his hooke  
þe bushes and þe ferne so þat þe corne may comen heuy  
of eres and of greins. hony is þe more swete yif mouþes  
han firste tastid sauoures þat ben wikke. ¶ þe sterres  
shynen more agreably whan þe wynde Nothus letiþ his  
ploungy blastes. and aftir þat lucifer þe day sterre hap  
chased away þe derke nyzt. þe day þe feirer lediþ þe  
rosene horse of þe sonne. ¶ Ryzt so þou byholdyng  
first þe fals[e] goodes. bygynne to wiþdrawe þi nek[ke]  
fro þe zok of erpely affeccions. and afterwarde þe  
verrey goodes shollen entre in to þi corage. 1750

TUNC DEFIXO PAULULUM.

ÞO fastned[e] she a lytel þe syzt of hir eyen and wiþ-  
drow hir ryzt as it were in to þe streite sete of hir  
þouzt. and bygan to speke ryzt þus. Alle þe cures  
*quod* she of mortal folk whiche þat trauaylen hem in  
many manere studies gon certys by diuerse weies.  
¶ But napeles þei enforced hem \*to comen oonly to on

1734 *wol*—H. shalle  
1739 *wil*—wole  
*felde*—feeld  
1740 *delyuer*—delyuere  
*of*—fro  
*hooke*—hook  
1741 *bushes*—bosses  
*ferne*—fern  
*corne*—koru  
1743 *firste*—fyrst

1743 *wikke*—wyckyd  
1744 *wynde*—wynd  
*his*—hise  
1745 *hap*—MS. hape  
1746 *feirer*—fayrere  
1747 *horse*—hors  
*Ryzt*—And Ryht  
1748 *fals[e]*—false  
*bygynne*—bygyn  
*wiþdrawe*—with drawen

1748 *nek[ke]*—nekke  
1749 *afterwarde*—after-  
ward  
1750 *entre*—entren  
1751 *fastned[e]*—fastnede  
*wiþdrow*—MS. wiþ-  
drown, C. with drowh  
1752 *sete*—Cyte  
1756 *enforced*—enforsen



ende of blisfulnesse [And blysfulesse] is swiche a goode þat who so haþ geten it he ne may ouer þat no þing more desire. and þis þing for soþe is þe souereyne good þat containþ in hym self al manere goodes. to þe whiche goode yif þere failed[e] any þing. it myzt[e] nat ben souereyne goode. ¶ For þan were þere som goode out of þis ilke souereyne goode þat myzt[e] ben desired. Now is it clere and certeyne þan þat blisfulnesse is a perfit estat by þe congregacioun of alle goodes. ¶ þe whiche blisfulnesse as I haue seid alle mortal folke enforen hem to geten by dyuerse weyes. ¶ For-whi þe couetise of verray goode is naturely y-plaunted in þe hertys of men. ¶ But þe myswandryng errour mysledþ hem in to fals[e] goodes. ¶ of þe whiche men some of hem wenen þat souereyne goode is to lyue wiþ outen nede of any þing. and traueilen hem to ben habundaunt of rycchesse. and some oþer men demen. þat souerein goode be forto be ryzt digne of reuerences. and enforen hem to ben reuerenced among hir neyþbours. by þe honours þat þei han ygeten ¶ and some folk þer ben þat halden þat ryzt heyze power to be souereyn goode. and enforen hem forto regnen or ellys to ioignen hem to hem þat regnen. ¶ And it semet to some oþer folk þat noblesse of renoun be þe souerein goode. and hasten hem to geten glorious name by þe artes of werre or of pees. and many folke mesuren and gessen þat souerein goode be ioye and gladnesse and wenen þat it be ryzt blisful [thyng] to ploungen hem in uoluptuous delit. ¶ And þer ben folk þat enterchaungen þe causes and þe endes

True happiness is that complete good which, once obtained, leaves nothing more to be desired. It is the sovereign good, and comprehends all others. It lacks nothing, otherwise it could not be the supreme good. Happiness is, therefore, that perfect state, in which all other goods meet and centre. It is the object which all men strive after. A desire of the true good is a natural instinct, but error misleads them to pursue false joys.

1769 Some, imagining the supreme good to consist in lacking nothing, labour for an abundance of riches; others, supposing that this good lies in the reverence and esteem of their fellow men, strive to acquire honourable positions. There are some, again, who place it in supreme power, and seek to rule, or to be favoured by the ruling powers. There are those who fancy fame to be the height of happiness, and seek by the arts of war or peace to get renown. Many there are who believe nothing to be better than joy and gladness, and think it delightful to plunge into luxury.

1757 [And blysfulesse] —  
goode—good [from C.  
1758 so—so þat  
haþ—MS. haþe  
1759 souereyne—souereyn  
1760 al—alle  
goode—good  
1761 þere—ther  
failed[e]—faylyde  
myzt[e]—myhte  
souereyne goode—souereyn  
good  
1762 þan—thanne  
þere—ther

1762 goode—good  
souereyne—souereyn  
1763 goode—good  
myzt[e]—myhte  
1764 certeyne—certein  
1766 seid — MS. seide, C.  
folke—foolk [seyd  
1767 goode—good.  
1769 fals[e]—false  
1770 souereyne goode is —  
souereyn good be  
1771 lyue wiþ outen—lyuen  
with owte  
1772 rycchesse—Rychesses

1773 some—som  
goode be—good ben  
1774 be—ben  
1775 neyþbours—nesshebers  
1776 halden—holden  
1777 heyze—heyh  
to—omitted  
goode—good  
1780 goode—good  
1781 or—and  
1782 folke—folk  
goode—good  
1783 be—by  
1784 [thyng]—from C.



Some there are who use these causes and ends interchangeably, as those who desire riches as a means of getting power; or who desire power in order to get money or renown. In all they do they have a particular end in view. Nobility and popular favour are sought after by some in order to become famous. By others, wives and children are only desired as sources of pleasure. Friendship must not be reckoned among the goods of fortune, but among those of virtue, for it is a very sacred thing. All else are desired either for the power or pleasure they afford.

1802

The goods of the body fall under the same predicament. Strength and a good stature seem to give power and worthiness. Beauty and swiftness give glory and fame; and health gives delight. In all these happiness alone is sought. What a man most wishes for, that he esteems the supreme good, which, as we have defined, is happiness. Thou hast now before thee a view of human felicity (falsely so called), that is, riches, honours, power, glory, and delight, which last *Epicurus*

of þise forseide goodes as þei þat desiren rycchesse to han power *and* delices. Or ellis þei desiren power forto han moneye or for cause of renoun. ¶ In þise þinges *and* in swyche oþer þinges is tourned al þe entencioun of desirynges *and* [of] werkes of men. ¶ As þus. ¶ Noblesse *and* fauour of poeple whiche þat ȝiueþ as it semeþ a manere clernesse of renoun. ¶ *and* wijf *and* children þat men desiren for cause of delit *and* mirinesse. ¶ But forsoþe frendes ne shollen nat ben rekened among þe goodes of fortune but of vertue. for it is a ful holy manere þing. alle þise oþer þinges forsoþe ben taken for cause of power. or ellis for cause of delit. ¶ Certis now am I redy to referen þe goodes of þe body to þise forseide þinges abouen. ¶ For it semeþ þat strengþe *and* gretnesse of body ȝeuen power *and* worþinesse. ¶ *and* þat beaute *and* swiftnesse ȝeuen noblesse *and* glorie of renoun. *and* hele of body semeþ ȝiuen delit. ¶ In alle þise þingus it semeþ oonly þat blisfulnesse is desired. ¶ For-whi pilke þing þat euery man desireþ moost ouer alle þinges. he demieþ þat be þe souereyne goode. ¶ But I haue diffined þat blisfulnesse is þe souereyne goode. for whiche euery wyȝt demieþ þat pilke estat þat he desireþ ouer alle þinges þat it be þe blisfulnesse. ¶ Now hast þou þan byforne [thy eyen] almost al þe purposed forme of þe welfulness of mankynde. þat is to seyne rycchesse. honours. power. glorie. *and* delitz. þe whiche delit oonly considered Epicurus Iuged *and* establissed. þat delit is þe souereyne goode. for as myche as alle oþer þinges as hym þouȝt[e] by-refte away ioie *and* myrþe from þe herte. ¶ But I retourne aȝeyne to þe studies of meen.

1786 *rycchesse*—rychesses  
1787 *delices*—delytes  
1789 *oþer*—oother  
al—alle  
1790 [of]—from C.  
1794 *shollen*—sholden  
1795 *þe*—tho  
1796 *oþer*—oother  
1801 *swiftnesse*—sweftnesse  
1803 *ȝiuen*—MS. ȝiueþ, C.

yeuen  
1806, 1807 *souereyne goode*—  
souereyn good  
1807 *whiche*—whyeh  
1809 *þe*—omitted [for  
þan byforne—thane by-  
1810 [thy eyen]—from C.;  
MS. has ȝeuen aȝeyne  
almost—almost  
*welfulnesse*—welfulnesse

1811 *seyne rycchesse*—seyne  
Rychesses  
1814 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good  
*myche*—moche  
*oþer*—oother  
1815 *þouȝt[e]*—thowhte  
from—fram  
1816 *aȝeyne*—aycyn

of whiche men þe corage alwey rehersiþ *and* seekeþ þe souereyne goode of alle be it so þat it be wiþ a derke memorie [but he not by whiche paath]. ¶ Ryzt as a dronke man not nat by whiche pape he may retourne home to hys house. ¶ Semeþ it þanne þat folk folyen *and* erren þat enforen hem to haue nede of no þing ¶ Certys þer nys non oþer þing þat may so weel perfourny blisfulnesse as an estat plenteuous \*of alle goodes þat ne haþ nede of none oþer þing. but þat it is suffisant of hym self. vnto hym self. and foleyen swyche folk þanne. þat wenen þat þilk þing þat is ryzt goode. þat it be eke ryzt worþi of honour *and* of reuerence. ¶ Certis nay. for þat þing nys neyþer foule ne worþi to ben dispised þat al þe entencioun of mortel folke trauaille forto geten it. ¶ And power auzt[e] nat þat eke to be rekened amonges goodes what ellis. for it nys nat to wene þat þilke þing þat is most worþi of alle þinges be feble *and* wiþ out strengþe *and* clernesse of renoun auzte þat to ben dispised. ¶ Certys þer may no man forsake þat al þing þat is ryzt excellent *and* noble. þat it ne semeþ to be ryzt clere *and* renowned. ¶ For certis it nedip nat to seie. þat blisfulnesse be anguissous ne dreri ne subgit to greuances ne to sorwes. syn þat in ryzt litel þingus folk seken to haue *and* to vsen þat may deliten hem. ¶ Certys þise ben þe þinges þat men wolen *and* desyren to geten. and for þis cause desiren þei ryches. dignites. regnes. glorie *and* delices ¶ For þerby wenen þei to han suffisaunce honour power. renoun *and* gladnesse. ¶ þanne is it goode. þat men seken þus by so many dyuerse studies. In whiche desijr it may lyztly be shewed.

considered as the sovereign good. I now return to the inclinations and pursuits of mankind.

1820

Their minds are bent upon the chief good, and are ever seeking it with a darkened understanding, like a

drunken man,

[\* fol. 16.]

who cannot find his way home. Do they go astray who strive to keep themselves from want?

By no means.

No state is happier than that in which a man is above want, and independent of others.

Are they guilty of folly that seek esteem and reverence?

No; for that is not contemptible for which all men strive.

Is not power to be reckoned amongst desirable goods?

Why not? For

that is not an insignificant good which invests a man with authority and command.

Fame also is to be regarded, for everything excellent is also shining and renowned.

We hardly need say that happiness is not an unjoyous and melancholy state,

for in the pursuit of the smallest matters men seek only pleasure.

Hence it is that mankind seek riches, &c., because by them they hope to get independence, honour, &c.

However varied

1818 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good  
of—omitted  
alle—al  
derke—dirkyd  
1819 [*but—paath*—from C.  
1820 *dronke*—dronken  
pape—paath  
1821 *home*—hym

1823 *perfourny*—performe  
1825 *hap*—MS. hape  
none—nou  
1827 *þilk*—þilke  
1828 *goode*—good  
1829 *foule*—fowl  
1830 *al*—welneyh alle  
1831 *trauaille*—trauaylen  
*auzt[e]*—owhte

1832 *be*—ben  
1834 *out*—owte  
1835 *auzte*—owhte  
1836 *al*—alle  
1837 *be*—ben  
*clere*—cleer  
1843 *ryches*—Rychesses  
1846 *goode*—good  
1847 *be*—ben

their desires,  
*happiness* is their  
sole pursuit.  
However various  
men's opinions  
are respecting  
happiness, all  
agree in pursuing  
it as the end of  
their actions and  
desires.

[The 2<sup>d</sup>e Metur.]  
I will now sing  
of Nature's laws,  
by which the  
universe is  
governed.

how grete is þe strengþe of nature. ¶ For how so þat  
men han dyuerse sentences *and* discordyng algates men  
accordyn alle in lyuyng þe ende of goode. 1850

## QUANTAS RERUM FLECTAT.

[I likeþ me to shew[e] by subtil songe wiþ slakke *and*  
delitable soun of strenges how þat nature myzty en-  
clineþ *and* flitteþ gouvernementz of þinges ¶ *and* by  
whiche lawes she purueiable kepþ þe grete worlde. *and*

1855 how she bindyngre restreineþ alle þingus by a bonde þat

[j] The Punic lion  
submits to man,  
and dreads the  
keeper's lash;

may nat be vnbounden. ¶ Al be it so þat þe liouns of  
þe contree of pene beren þe fair[e] cheines. *and* taken  
metes of þe handes of folk þat zeuen it hem. *and*

1859 dreden her sturdy maystres of whiche þei ben wont

yet, if he once  
taste blood,

to suffren [betinges]. yif þat hir horrible mouþes ben bi-  
bled. þat is to sein of bestes deuoured. ¶ Hir corage  
of tyme passeþ þat haþ ben ydel *and* rested. repaireþ  
azein þat þei roren greuously. *and* remembre on hir

his savage in-  
stincts revive,

1864 nature. *and* slaken hir nekkes from hir cheins vn-

and his keeper  
falls a victim to  
his fury.

bounden. and hir maistre first to-teren wiþ bloody toþe  
assaieþ þe woode wrappes of hem. ¶ þis is to sein þei

[ij]  
If the caged bird  
though daintily  
fed, gets a sight  
of the pleasant  
grove where she  
was wont to sing,

freten hir maister. ¶ And þe Iangland brid þat syngþ  
on þe heye braunches. þis is to sein in þe wode *and*  
after is inclosed in a streit cage. ¶ al þouz [þat] þe

1870 pleiyng besines of men zeueþ hem honied[e] drinkes  
*and* large metes. wiþ swete studie. ¶ zit napeles yif

she will spurn  
her food, and  
pine for the  
beloved woods,

þilke brid skippyngre oute of hir streite cage seeþ þe  
agreable shadewes of þe wodes. she defouleþ wiþ hir  
fete hir metes yshad *and* sekeþ mournyng oonly þe  
wode *and* twitriþ desiryngre þe wode wiþ hir swete  
voys. ¶ þe zerde of a tree þat is haled adoun by myzty

[iij]  
The sapling, bent  
down by a mighty

1848 grete—gret  
1849 algates—Allegates  
1850 goode—good  
1851 shew[e]—shewe  
1854 whiche—MS. swiche, C.  
whyche  
worlde—world  
1856 be—ben  
vnbounden—vnbownde

1857 fair[e]—fayre  
1860 [beinges]—from C.  
1862 passeþ—passed  
1864 from—fram  
vnbounden—vnbownde  
1865 to-teren—to-torn  
toþe—toth  
1867 Iangland—Iangelyngre  
1869 streit—sreylt

1870 pleiyng—MS. pleinyng,  
C. pleyngre  
besines—bysynesse  
honied[e]—honyede  
1872 oute—owt  
1873 agreable—agreables  
1874 fete—fete  
1875 twitriþ—twiterith



strengþe bowiþ redely þe crophe adoun. but yif þat þe hande of hym þat it bente lat it gon azein. ¶ An oon þe croph. lokeþ vp ryȝt to heuene. ¶ þe sonne phebus þat failleþ at euene in þe westrene wawes retorniþ azein eftsones his cart by a priue pape þere as it is wont aryse. ¶ Alle þinges seken azein in to hir propre cours. and alle þinges reioisen hem of hir retournynge azein to hir nature ne noon ordinaunce nis bytaken to þinges but þat. þat haþ ioignyng þe endynge to þe bygynnyng. *and* haþ makid þe cours of it self stable þat it chaungeþ nat from hys propre kynde. 1887

## VOSQUE TERRENA ANIMALIA.

\* (Ertis also 3e men þat ben erþeliche bestes dremen alwey [yowre bygynnyng] al þouȝ it be wiþ a pinne ymaginacioun. *and* by a maner þouȝt al be it nat clerly ne perfityly 3e looken from a fer til pilk verray fyn of blisfulnesse. and þerfore þe naturel entencioun ledeþ 3ow to pilk verray good ¶ But many manere errours mistourniþ 3ow þer fro. ¶ Considere now yif þat be þilke þinges by whiche a man weniþ to gete hym blysfulesse. yif þat he may comen to pilke ende þat he wenep to come by nature ¶ For yif þat moneye or honours or þise oþer forseide þinges bryngen to men swiche a þing þat no goode ne faille hem. ne semeþ faille. ¶ Certys þan wil I graunt[e] þat þei ben maked blisful. by þilke þinges þat þei han geten. ¶ but yif so be þat þilke þinges ne mowe nat perfourmen þat þei by-heten *and* þat þer be defaute of many goodes. ¶ Shewep it nat þan clerely þat fals beaute of blisfulnesse is knowe *and* a-teint in þilke þinges. ¶ First *and* forward þou þi self þat haddest

hand, will resume its natural position as soon as the restraining force is removed. [iii]

Though the sun sets in the western main at eve, yet by a secret path he takes his wonted journey toward the east. All things pursue their proper course, obedient to the source of order. Hence, throughout the world entire stability is found, for all things, having fulfilled their appointed course, return from whence they came.

[The 3<sup>d</sup>e prose.]

[\* fol. 16 b.]

O earthly animals, you have an indistinct perception of your beginning, and you have ever the true end of felicity in view, but your natural instincts are perverted by many errors.

1893

Can men obtain the end they have in view by the means they usually employ in the pursuit of happiness? If riches and honours and the like make men happy, so that they shall want for nothing, then happiness may be procured by these acquisitions.

1901

But if these things cannot make good what they promise, if there still be something to be desired, then they are delusions, and the felicity after all is a counterfeit.

1877 *crophe*—crop  
1878 *hande*—hand  
*bente*—bent  
1880 *failleþ*—falleth  
1881 *cart*—carte  
*a*—omitted  
*pape*—paath  
1883 *of*—MS. of of  
1885 *haþ*—MS. haþe

1885 *ioignyng*—Ioyned  
1886 *haþ*—MS. haþe [from C.  
1889 [*yowre bygynnyng*]  
*al*—MS. as, C. Al  
1891 *from*—fram  
*til pilk*—to thylke  
1892 *þe*—omitted  
1893 *pilk*—thylke  
1895 *þe*—by

1896 *gete*—geten  
1899 *swiche*—swych  
*goode*—good  
1900 *wil*—wole  
*graunt[e]*—graunte  
1904 *many*—manye  
*clerely*—clerly  
*fals*—false  
1905 *knowe*—knowen



In your prosperity were you never annoyed by some wrong or grievance?

1910

B. I must confess that I cannot remember ever being wholly free from some trouble or other.

P. That was because something was absent which you did desire, or something present which you would fain be quit of.

B. That's quite true.

P. Then you did desire the presence of the one and the absence of the other?

B. I confess I did.

P. Every man is in need of what he desires.

B. Certainly he is.

P. If a man lack anything can he be supremely happy?

B. No.

P. Did you not in your abundance want for somewhat?

B. What then if I did?

P. It follows that riches cannot put a man beyond all want, although this was what they seemed to promise.

Money may part company with its owner, however unwilling he may be to lose it.

B. I confess that's true.

P. It ought to be confessed when every day we see might prevailing over right.

From whence springs so much litigation, but from this, that men seek to re-

haboundaunces of ryccresses nat long agon. ¶ I axe zif þat in þe haboundaunce of alle pilk[e] ryccresses þou<sup>w</sup> were neuer anguissous or sory in þi corage of any wrong or greuauunce þat by-tidde þe on any syde.

¶ Certys quod I it remembreþ me nat þat euere I was so free of my þouzt. þat I ne was al-wey in anguyshe of somwhat. þat was þat þou lakkedest þat þou noldest han lakked. or ellys þou haddest þat þou noldest han had. ryzt so is it quod I þan. desiredest þou þe presence of þat oon and þe absence of þat oþer. I graunt[e] wel quod .I. for soþe quod she þan nedip þer somwhat þat euery man desireþ. 3e þer nedip quod I.

¶ Certis quod she and he þat haþ lakke or nede of a wyzt nis nat in euery way suffisaunt to hym self. no quod .I. and þou quod she in alle þe plente of þi ryccesse haddest pilke lak of suffisaunce. ¶ what ellis quod .I. ¶ þanne may nat ryccesse maken þat a man nis nedy. ne þat he be suffisaunt to hym self. and þat was it þat þei byhyzten as it semep. ¶ and eke certys I trowe þat þis be gretly to consydere þat moneye ne haþ nat in hys owen kynde þat it ne may ben by-nomen of hem þat han it maugre hem. ¶ I by-knowe it wel quod I ¶ whi sholdest þou nat by-knowen it quod she. whan euery day þe strengere folke by-nymen it fram þe febler maugre hem. ¶ Fro whennes comen ellys alle þise foreine compleintes or quereles of pletyngus. ¶ But for þat men axen azeine her moneye þat haþ be by-nomen hem by force or by gyle. and alwey maugre hem. ¶ Ryzt so it is quod I. þan quod she haþ a man nede to seken hym foreyne helpe by whiche he may defende hys moneye. who may say nay

1908 *pilk[e]*—thylke1913 *þat*—*lakkedest*—And was nat *þat quod* she for þat the lacked som-what1915 *had*—MS. hadde, C. had1917 *graunt[e]*—grauate1919 *haþ*—MS. haþe*a wyzt*—awht1921 *alle*—al1922 *ryccesse*—Ryccesses  
*lak*—lakke1923 *ryccesse*—Ryccesses1927 *haþ*—MS. haþe*owen*—owne1930 *strenger folke by-nymen*

—strengere folk by-nemyn

1931 *fram*—fro1931 *febler*—febelere  
*Fro*—For1933 *azeine*—ayeyn1934 *haþ*—MS. haþe*be*—ben1936 *haþ*—MS. haþe*helpe*—help1937 *say*—sey

*quod* .I. ¶ Certis *quod* she *and* hym nedip no helpe yif he ne hadde no moneye þat he myzt[e] leese. ¶ þat is doutles *quod* .I. þanne is þis þing turned in to þe contrarie *quod* she ¶ For rycheſſe þat men wenen sholde make suffisaunce. þei maken a man raþer han nede of foreine helpe. ¶ whiche is þe manere or þe giſe *quod* she þat rycheſſe may dryuen away nede. ¶ Riche folk may þei neiþer han hungre ne þreſt. þiſe ryche men may þei feele no colde on hir lymes in wynter. ¶ But þou wilt anſwere þat ryche men han y-nou3 wher wiþ þei may ſtaunchen her hunger. *and* ſlaken her þreſt *and* don away colde. ¶ In þis wiſe may nede be confortd by rycheſſes. but certys nede ne may nat al outerly be don away. for þou3 þis nede þat is alwey gapyng *and* gredy be fulfilled wiþ rycheſſes. *and* axe any þing 3it dwelleþ þanne a nede þat myzt[e] ben fulfilled. ¶ I holde me ſtille *and* telle nat how þat litel þing ſuffiſeþ to nature. but certys to auarice ynou3 ne ſuffiſeþ no þinge. \*¶ For ſyn þat rycheſſe ne may nat al don away nede. but rycheſſe maken nede. what may it þanne be þat 3e wenen þat rycheſſes mowen 3euen 3ow ſuffiſaunce.

1959

## QUAMUIS FLUENTER DIUES.

**A**l were it ſo þat a ryche couetous man hadde riuer fletyng alle of golde 3itte ſholde it neuer ſtaunche hys couetiſe. ¶ And þou3 he hadde his nekke I-charged wiþ preciouſe ſtones of þe rede ſee. *and* þou3 he do erylle his feldeſ plentiuouſ wiþ an hundreþ oxen neuere ne ſhal his bytyng byſyneſſe forleten hym while he

cover their own of which they have been unjustly deprived?

1940

*B.* Nothing is more true.

*P.* Then a man needs the assistance of others in order to keep his riches. If he had no money to lose he would not stand in need of this help?

*B.* That is beyond all doubt.

*P.* Then the very reverse of what was expected (from riches) takes place? For riches add to a man's necessities. Tell me how do riches drive away necessity? Are not rich men liable to hunger, thirst, and cold? You will say that the rich have wherewithal to satisfy these wants. By riches judiciousness may be alleviated, but they cannot satisfy every want.

[\* fol. 17.]

Even if gaping and greedy necessity be filled with riches, yet some cravings will remain. A little suffices for nature, but avarice never has enough.

If riches, then, add to our wants, why should you think that they can supply all your necessities?

[The 3<sup>d</sup> Metur.]

The rich man, had he a river of gold, would never rest content.

Though his neck be loaded with precious pearls, and his fields be covered with in-

1938 *nedip no helpe*—nedede  
non help  
1939 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
1940 *doutles*—dowteles  
1941 *rycheſſe*—Rycheſſes  
1943 *helpe*—help  
*whiche*—whyche  
1944 *ryches*—Rycheſſe  
*dryuen*—dryue  
1945 *hungre*—hungry  
*þreſt*—þurſt

1946 *þei*—the  
*colde*—coold  
*in*—on  
1947 *wilt anſwere* — wolt  
Anſweren  
*y-nou3*—y-now  
1948 *þreſt*—þurſt  
1949 *colde*—coold  
1950 *nat*—omitted  
1951 *outerly*—vtrely  
1953 *myzt[e] ben*—myhte be

1957 *rycheſſe*—Rycheſſes  
1960 *riuer*—a Ryuer  
1961 *alle*—al  
*golde*—gold  
*3itte*—yit  
*ſtaunche*—ſtaunchyn  
1962, 1963 *þou3*—þhow  
1964 *erylle*—Ere  
*hundreþ*—hundred  
1965 *while*—whyll

numerable herds,  
yet shall unquiet  
care never forsake  
him; and at his  
death his riches  
shall not bear  
him company.

1 Read *dignitates*.

[The 4<sup>th</sup> prose.]

It may be said  
that *dignities*  
confer honour on  
their possessors.  
But have they  
power to destroy  
vice or implant  
virtue in the  
heart?

So far from ex-  
pelling vicious  
habits, they only  
render them more  
conspicuous.

Hence arises the  
indignation when  
we see dignities  
given to wicked  
men.  
Hence Catullus'  
resentment  
against Nonius,  
whom he calls  
the botch, or im-  
postume of the  
State.

1980

The deformities  
of wicked men  
would be less  
apparent if they  
were in more ob-  
scure situations.  
Would you free  
yourself from  
peril by accepting  
a magistracy  
along with De-  
coratus a buffoon  
and informer?

1987

Honours do not  
render undeserv-  
ing persons  
worthy of esteem.

If you find a man  
endowed with  
wisdom you

1966 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte

*shal*—shol

1967 *dede*—ded

1968 *make*—maken

1969 *grete*—gret

1972 [*ne*]—from C.

*ben*—be

1972, 1973 *wikkednesses* —

*wykkynesse*

1973 *to*—omitted

*shaw[en]*—shewen

1974 *comeþ*—comth

lyueþ. ne þe lyzt[e] rychesses ne shal nat beren hym  
compaignie whanne he is dede. 1967

SET DIGNITATIBUS.<sup>1</sup>

**B**vt dignitees to whom þei ben comen make þei hym  
honorable *and* reuerent. han þei nat so grete strengþe  
þat þei may putte vertues in þe hertis of folk. þat vsen  
þe lordshipes of hem. or ellys may þei don away þe  
vices. Certys þei [ne] ben nat wont to don away wikked-  
nesses. but þei ben wont raþer to shew[en] wikked-  
nesses. *and* þer of comeþ it þat I haue ryzt grete des-  
deyne. þat dignites ben zeuen ofte to wikked men.

¶ For whiche þing catullus clepid a consul of Rome þat  
hyt nonius postum. or boch. as who seiþ he clepiþ  
hym a congregacioun of uices in his brest as a postum  
is ful of corrupcioun. al were þis nonius set in a

chayere of dignitee. Sest þou nat þan how gret vylenye  
dignitees don to wikked men. ¶ Certys vnworþines of

wikked men sholde ben þe lasse ysen yif þei nere re-  
nomed of none honours. ¶ Certys þou þi self ne  
myzttest nat ben brouzt wiþ as many perils as þou  
myzttest suffren þat þou woldest bere þi magistrat wiþ  
decorat. þat is to seyn. þat for no peril þat myzt[e] bi-

fallen þe by þe offence of þe kyng theodorik þou noldest  
nat ben felawe in gouernaunce *with* decorat. whanne  
þou say[e] þat he had[de] wikkid corage of a likerous  
shrewe *and* of an acusor. ¶ Ne I ne may nat for swiche

honours Iugen hem worþi of reuerence þat I deme *and*  
holde vnworþi to han þilke same honours. ¶ Now yif

þou saie a man þat were fulfilled of wisdom. certys þou

1974 *grete desdeyne* — gret  
desdaign

1976 *whiche*—which

1977 *hyzt*—hyhte

*nonius*—MS. vonnus, C.

*nomyus*

*boch*—MS. boþe, C. boch

*clepiþ*—clepyd

1979 *nonius*—MS uonnus, C.

*nomyus*

*set*—MS. sette, C. set

1980 *Sest þou*—Sesthow

1980 *þan*—thanne

*vylenye*—fylonye [ynesse

1981 *vnworþines*—vnworth-

1982 *ben*—be

*ysen*—MS. ysene, C. I-sene

1984 *many*—manye

1985 *bere*—beren

1986 *myzt[e]*—myhte

1987 *þe* (2)—omitted

1988 *whanne*—whan

1989 *say[e]*—saye

*had[de]*—hadde



ne myztest nat demen þat he were vnworþi to þe honour. or ellys to þe wisdom of whiche he is fulfilled. No *quod* .I. ¶ Certys dignitees *quod* she appertienen properly to vertue. *and* uertue transporteþ dignite anon to þilke man to whiche she hir self is conioigned. ¶ And for as moche as honours of poeple ne may nat maken folk digne of honour. it is wel seyn clerly þat þei ne han no propre beaute of dignite. ¶ And 3it men auzten take more hede in þis. ¶ For if it so be þat he is most out cast þat most folk dispisen. or as dignite ne may nat maken shrewes worþi of no reuerences. þan makeþ dignites shrewes more dispised þan preised. þe whiche shrewes dignit[e] scheweþ to moche folk ¶ *and* for soþe nat vnpunished. þat is forto sein. þat shrewes reuengen hem azeinward vpon dignites. for þei zelden azein to dignites as gret gerdoun whan þei byspotten *and* defoulen dignites wiþ hire vyleneie. ¶ And for as moche as þou mow[e] knowe þat þilke verray reuerence ne may nat comen by þe shadewy *transitorie* dignitees. vndirstonde now þis. yif þat a man hadde vsed *and* hadde many manere dignites of consules *and* were comen *perauenture* amonges straunge naciouns. sholde þilke honour maken hym worshipful *and* redouted of straunge folk ¶ Certys yif þat honour of poeple were a naturel 3ifte to dignites. it ne myzte neuer cesen nowher amonges no maner folke to done hys office. ¶ Ryzt as fire in euery contre ne stinteþ nat to enchaufen *and* \*to ben hote. but for as myche as forto be holden honorable or reuerent ne comeþ nat to folk of

deem him worthy of respect and of the wisdom which he professes.

B. I could not do otherwise.

P. Virtue has her proper worth, which she ever transfers to her votaries.

Honours conferred by the populace do not make men worthy of them, for they have no intrinsic merit to bestow.

Dignities conferred upon shrews only make their vices the more conspicuous. — Nor do dignities themselves escape without injury; for worthless men take their revenge upon them, and defile them by their contagious villainies.

2009

These shadowy honours have nothing in their nature to procure respect; for if a man, having borne the honours of the consulate, should go among barbarians would this honour gain him their respect?

2016

If respect were an attribute of honour it would infallibly bring esteem everywhere, just as heat is ever an attribute of fire.

[\* fol. 17 b.]

Honours arise from the false

1994 *demen*—deme  
1995 *whiche*—which  
1996 *quod she*—omitted  
1997 *vertue*—vertu  
*uertue*—vertu  
1998 *whiche*—whych  
2000 *clerly*—MS. clerkly, C. clerly  
2002 *auzten* — *hede* — owhten taken mor heed  
2002-3 *For*—*dignite*—For yif so be þat a wykkyd whyght be so mochel the fowlere *and* the moore

owt cast þat he is despised of most folk so as dignete  
2004-2007 *maken* — *soþe*—maken shrewes digne of Reuerence the whych shrewes dignete sheweth to moche fook thanne makith dignete shrewes rather so moche more despised than preyed *and* forsothe  
2003 *zelden*—yilden  
2009 *byspotten*—by-spetten

2010 *hire*—hyr  
2011 *moche*—mochel  
*mow[e]*—mowe  
2012 *þe shadewy* — thyse shadwy  
2013 *vndirstonde* — vndyr-*pis*—thus [stond  
2014 *hadde*—had  
2018 *3ifte*—yift  
2019 *folke*—foolk  
*done*—don  
2021 *enchaufen* — eschaufen  
2021 *myche*—mochel  
2022 *be*—ben



opinions of men, and vanish when they come among those who do not esteem them, that is, among foreign nations.

hir propre strengþe of nature. but only of þe fals[e] opinioun of folk. þat is to sein. þat wenen þat dignites maken folk digne of honour. An on þerfore whan þat þei comen þer as folk ne knowen nat þilke dignites.

2027 her honours vanissen away *and* þat on oon. but þat is a-mong straung folk. maist þou sein. but amongus hem þat þei weren born duren þilke[e] dignites alwey.

Do they always endure in those places that gave birth to them?

The Prætorate was once a great honour, but now it is only an empty name and a heavy expense.

¶ Certys þe dignite of þe prouostrie of Rome was somtyme a grete power. now is it no þing but an ydel name. *and* þe rente of þe senatorie a gret charge. *and* yif a whiȝt somtyme hadde þe office to taken he[de] to þe vitales of þe poeple as of corne *and* what oþer þinges he was holden amonges grete. but what þing is more

What is more vile than the office of the superintendency of provisions?

That which hath no innate beauty must lose its splendour or value according as popular opinion varies concerning it.

nowe out cast þanne þilke prouostrie ¶ And as I haue seid a litel here byforne. þat þilke þing þat haþ no propre beaute of hym self reseceyueþ somtyme pris *and* shynynge *and* somtyme lesiþ it by þe opinioun of vsaunces. ¶ Now yif þat dignites þanne ne mowen nat maken folk digne of reuerence. *and* yif þat dignites wexen foule of hir wille by þe filþe of shrewes. ¶ *and* yif þat dignites lesen hir shynynge by chaungynge of tymes. *and* yif þei wexen foule by estimacioun of poeple. what is it þat þei han in hem self of beaute þat auȝte ben desired. as who seiþ none. þanne ne mowen þei ȝiuen no beaute of dignite to none oþer. 2047

If dignities cannot confer esteem, if they become vile through filthy shrews, if they lose their lustre by the change of times, if they become worthless by the change of popular opinion, what beauty do they possess which should make them desirable, or what dignity can they confer on others?

## QUAMUIS SE TIRIO.

[The 4<sup>th</sup> Metur.] Nero, though invested with the purple and adorned with pearls, was hated by all men.

Al be it so þat þe proude nero wiþ al his woode luxurie kembed hym *and* apparailed hym wiþ faire purpers of Tirie *and* wiþ white perles. Algates ȝitte throf he

2023 fals[e]—false  
2024 þat (2)—omitted  
2027 her—hyr  
vanissen—vanessen  
2028 a-mong—amonges  
straung—straunge  
but—ne  
2029 þat—ther  
duren þilk[e]—ne duren  
nat thylke  
2030 somtyme—whylom

2031 grete—gret  
2032 þe (2)—omitted  
2033 somtyme—whylom  
þe—MS. þe þe  
2034 corne—corn  
what—omitted  
2035 more nowe—now more  
2036 cast—MS. caste, C. cast  
2037 seið—MS. seide, C. seyð  
here byforne—her by-form  
haþ—MS. haþe

2042 filþe—felthe  
2043 þat—omitted  
2046 auȝte—owhte  
none—non  
2047 þei—MS. ȝe, C. they  
none—non  
2048 al (2)—alle  
2049 kembed—kembde  
apparailed—MS. apparaill  
en. C. a-paraylede  
2050 ȝitte—ȝit

hateful to alle folk ¶ þis is to seyn þat al was he by- 2051  
hated of alle folk. ¶ 3itte þis wicked Nero hadde gret  
lordship *and* 3af somtyme to þe dredeful senatours þe  
vnworshipful setes of dignites. ¶ vnworshipful setes  
he clepiþ here fore þat Nero þat was so wikked 3af þo  
dignites. who wolde þanne resonably wenen þat blysful-  
nesse were in swiche honours as ben 3euen by vicious 2057  
shrewes.

Yet he had lord-  
ship, and gave to  
the senators the  
dishonoured seats  
of dignity.  
Who then can  
think that felicity  
resides in honours  
given by vicious  
shrews?

## AN UERO REGNA.

[The 5<sup>th</sup> prose.]

**B**vt regnes *and* familiarites of kynges may þei maken a  
man to ben myzty. how ellys. ¶ whanne hir  
blisfulnesse dureþ perpetuely but certys þe olde age of  
tyme passeþ. *and* eke of present tyme now is ful of en-  
saamples how þat kynges þat han chaunged in to  
wrechednesse out of hir welefulnesse. ¶ O a noble þing  
*and* a cler þing is power þat is nat founden myzty to  
kepe it self. ¶ And yif þat power of realmes be auctour  
*and* maker of blisfulnesse. yif þilke power lakkeþ on  
any side. amenusiþ it nat þilke blisfulnesse *and* bryngeþ  
in wrechednesse. but yif al be it so þat realmes of man-  
kynde stretchen broode. 3it mot þer nede ben myche  
folk ouer whiche þat euery kyng ne haþ no lordshipe  
ne comaundement ¶ *and* certys vpon þilke syde þat  
power failleþ whiche þat makieþ folk blisful. ryzt on þat  
same side nounpower entriþ vndirneþ þat makeþ hem  
wreches. ¶ In þis manere þanne moten kynges han  
more porcioun of wrechednesse þan of welefulnesse.  
¶ A tyraunt þat was kyng of sisile þat had[de] assaied  
þe peril of his estat shewid[e] by similitude þe dredes  
of realmes by gastnesse of a swerde þat heng ouer þe  
heued of his familier. what þing is þan þis power þat

P. Do kingdoms  
and a familiarity  
with princes  
make a man  
mighty?

B. Why should  
they not if they  
are durable?

P. Past ages, as  
well as the pre-  
sent, furnish us  
with many ex-  
amples of princes  
who have met  
with dismal re-  
verses of fortune.  
O then how noble  
and glorious a  
thing is power  
that is too weak  
to preserve itself!  
If dominion  
brings felicity,  
then misery will  
follow if it be de-  
fective.

But human rule  
has its limits,  
therefore wher-  
ever power ceases  
there impotence  
enters, bringing  
misery along  
with it.

2074

Kings, therefore,  
have a larger por-  
tion of misery  
than of felicity.

Dionysius of  
Sicily, conscious  
of this condition,  
exhibited the  
fears and cares of  
royalty by the  
terror of a naked  
sword hanging

2053 *lordship*—lorshippe  
3af somtyme—yaf whylom  
dredeful—reuerenc3  
2055 fore—for; 3af—yaf  
2060 *myzty*—MS. vnmzty,  
C. myhty  
2062 *passeþ*—passed  
of (2)—omitted

2063 *kynges þat han* —  
kynges ben  
2066 *kepe*—kepen  
2067 *maker*—makere  
2069 *yif*—yit  
*realmes*—the Reaumes  
2070 *stretchen*—streichchen  
*myche*—moche

2071 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
2073 *whiche*—whyeh  
2074 *vndirneþ*—vndyr-nethe  
2077 *had[de]*—hadde  
2078 *shewid[e]*—shewede  
2079 *realmes*—Reaumes  
*swerde*—sward  
*heng*—MS. henge, C. heng

over the head of his friend and flatterer Damocles. What then is this thing called

[\* fol. 18.]

Power, which cannot do away with care or fear? Men would live in security but cannot, and yet they glory in their power. Is he powerful who cannot do what he wishes? Is he a mighty man who goes surrounded with an armed guard, to terrify those whom he himself fears, and whose power depends solely upon his numerous retinue? Why need I enlarge upon the favourites of princes having thus displayed the imbecility of kings! Their prosperity is affected by the caprice of their fortunate masters as well as by the adversity to which

2098

they are incident. Nero only allowed his master Seneca to choose the manner of his death. Antonius (Caracalla) commanded Papinian to be slain by the swords of his soldiers. Yet both would have given up all they possessed. Seneca begged for poverty and exile. But relentless fortune precipitated them to destruction, and did not permit them to choose their fate. What then is Power, which terrifies its possessors, and which cannot be got rid of at pleasure? No advantage is to be gained by friend-

may nat don away þe bytynges of besines ne eschewe þe prikkes of drede. and certys 3it wolden þei lyuen \*in sykernesse. but þei may nat. and 3it þei glorifien hem in her power ¶ Holdest þou þan þat þilk[e] man be myzty þat þou seest þat he wolde don þat he may nat don. ¶ And holdest þou þan hym a myzty man þat haþ envired hise sydes wiþ men of armes or seruauntes *and* dredeþ more [hem] þat he makeþ agast. þen þei dreden hym. *and* þat is put in þe handes of hise seruauntz. for he sholde seme myzty but of familiers [or] seruauntz of kynges. ¶ what sholde I telle þe any þing. syn þat I my self haue shewed þe þat realmes hem self ben ful of gret feblenesse. þe whiche familiers certis þe real power of kynges in hool estat *and* in estat abated ful [ofte] þroweþ adoun. ¶ Nero constrained[e] his familier *and* his maistre seneca to chesen on what deep he wolde deien. ¶ Antonius comaundid[e] þat knyztis slown wiþ her swerdis Papinian his familier whiche Papinian had[de] ben long tyme ful myzty a-monges hem of þe courte. and 3it certis þei wolde boþe han renounced her power. of whiche [two] senek enforced[e] hym to 3iuen to Nero his rychesses. *and* also to han gon in to solitarie exil. ¶ But whan þe grete weyzt. þat is to sein of lordes power or of fortune draweþ hem þat sholden falle. neyþer of hem ne myzt[e] do þat he wolde. what þing is þanne þilke power þat þou3 men han it þat þei ben agast. ¶ *and* whan þou woldest han it þou nart nat siker. ¶ And yif þou woldest forleten it þou mayst nat eschewen it. ¶ But wheþir swiche men ben frendes at nede as ben conseiled by fortune *and* nat by vertue. Certys swiche

2081 *besines*—bysynesse

2083 *3it*—yif

*glorifien*—gloryfye

2084 *þilk[e]*—thylke

2087 *haþ*—MS. haþe

*envired*—enuyrowneþe

2088 [*hem*]—from C.

2089 *þen*—than

2091 [*or*]—from C

2092 *realmes*—Reames

2093 *feblenesse*—feblesse

2094 *real*—Ryal

2095 [*ofte*]—from C.

*constrained[e]* — com-

2096 *his* (1)—hyr [streynede

*seneca*—Senek

2097 *comaundid[e]* — com-

2098 *her*—hyr [aundede

2099 *whiche*—which

*had[de] ben long* — þat

hadde ben longe

2100 *courte*—court

*wolde*—wolden

2101 [*two*]—from C.

*enforced[e]*—enforcede

2102 *3iuen*—yeuen

*his*—hyse

2104 *weyzt*—weyhte

2105 *sholden*—sholen

2106 *myzt[e]*—myhte



folk as weleful fortune makeþ frendes. contrarious fortune makeþ hem enmyse. ¶ And what pestilence is more myzty forto anoye a wízt þan a familier enemy.

QUI SE UALET<sup>1</sup> ESSE POTENTEM. [1<sup>o</sup> Read *uole*]

Who so wolde ben myzty he mot daunten hys cruel corage. ne put[te] nat his nekke ouercomen vnder þe foule reines of lecherie. for al be it so þat þi lordship[e] strecche so fer þat þe contre Inde quakþ at þi comaundement. or at þi lawes. and þat þe leest isle in þe see þat hyzt tile be þral to þe ¶ 3it yif þou mayst nat puten away þi foule derk[e] desijres and dryuen oute fro þe wreched compleyntes. Certis it nis no power þat þou hast. 2123

GLORIA UERO QUAM FALLAX.

Bvt glorie how deceiuable and how foule is it ofte. for whiche þing nat vnskillfully a tregedien þat is to sein a maker of dities þat hyzten tregedies cried[e] and seide. ¶ O glorie glorie *quod* he. þou nart no þing ellys to þousandes of folkes. but a gret sweller of eres. for many[e] han had ful gret renoun by þe fals[e] opinioun of poeple. and what þing may ben þouzt fouler þen swiche preisyng for þilk[e] folk þat ben preised falsly. þei moten nedes han shame of hir preisynges. and yif þat folk han geten hem þank or preisyng by her desertes. what þing haþ þilk pris echid or encresed to þe conscience of wise folk þat mesuren hire good. not by þe rumour of þe poeple. but by þe soþfastnesse of conscience. and yif it seme a fair þing a man to han encresid and sprad his name. þan folweþ

ship based on prosperity instead of virtue. Adversity will turn this sort of friendship into enmity. And what greater plague can there be than the enmity of thy familiar friend? [The 5<sup>th</sup> Metatr.] He who would obtain sovereign power must obtain conquest over himself, and not yield to his passions. Though your dominion extended from India to Thule, yet if thou art tormented by care thou hast no real power.

[The 6<sup>th</sup> prose.]

How deceptive and deformed a thing is glory! Well did the Tragedian exclaim—  
ὠδὸφα δόξα  
υπριοισι δὴ  
βροτῶν, οὐδὲν  
εὐχῶσι βιοτῶν  
ἀγκισσας μέγαν,  
for the undeserving have been crowned with glory and renown by popular and erring opinion. What can be more infamous than renown founded on the prejudices of the vulgar? Those that are undeservedly praised ought to blush for shame. If a wise man gets well-merited praise it does not add to his felicity. If it be a good thing to spread

2115 *wolde ben*—wole be  
2116 *put[te]*—putte  
2117 *lordship[e]*—lordshype  
2119 *comaundement* — co-  
maundement;  
*leest isle*—last ile  
2120 *hyzt*—hyhte  
2121 *puten*—putten  
*derk[e]*—dyrke

2122 *oute*—owt  
2124 *foule*—fowl  
2125 *whiche*—whyche  
2126 *maker*—makere  
*cried[e]*—cryde  
2127 *he*—she  
2128 *sweller*—swellere  
2129 *many[e]*—manye  
*had*—MS. hadde, C. had

2129 *fals[e]*—false  
2130 *fouler*—fowler  
2131 *þen*—thanne  
*þilk[e]*—thylke  
2133 *or*—of  
2134 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*þilk*—thylke



abroad one's fame, it must be dishonourable not to do so. But a good name cannot penetrate everywhere, and the most illustrious names must be unknown to the greatest part of the world.

The favour of the people is worth but little as it is seldom judicious and  
[\* fol. 18 b.] never permanent.

How empty and transitory are titles of nobility!

2150

Gentility is wholly foreign to renown, and to those who boast of noble birth. Nobility is fame derived from the merits of one's ancestors.

If praise can give nobility they are noble who are praised.

Then if thou hast no nobility of thy own, thou canst not derive any splendour from the merits of others.

If there be any good in nobleness of birth, it consists alone in this, that it imposes an obligation upon its possessors not to degenerate from the virtues of their ancestors.

[The 6th Metre.]

All men have the same origin.

They have one father and one king, who gave the moon her horns, and adorned the sun with his rays. The same gave the earth to man

it. þat it is demed to ben a foule þinge yif it ne be ysprad ne encresed. but as I seide a litel her byforne. þat syn þer mot nedes ben many folk to whiche folk þe renoun of a man ne may nat comen. it byfalleþ þat he þat þou wenest be glorious *and* renommed. semip in þe nexte parties of þe erþe to ben wiþ out glorie. *and* wiþ out renoun. ¶ *and* certis amonges þise þinges I ne trowe nat þat þe pris *and* grace of þe poeple nis neiþer worþi \*to ben remembrid ne comeþ of wise iugement. ne is ferm *perdurably*. ¶ But now of þis name of gentillesse. what man is it þat ne may wel seen how veyne *and* how flittyng a þing it is. ¶ For if þe name of gentillesse be referred to renoun *and* clernesse of linage. þan is gentil name but a for[e]ine þing. þat is to sein to hem þat glorifien hem of hir linage. ¶ For it semeþ þat gentillesse be a maner preysynge þat comeþ of decert of auncestres. ¶ *And* yif preysynge makeþ gentillesse þan moten þei nedes be gentil þat ben preysed. For whiche þing it folweþ. þat yif þou ne haue no gentillesse of þi self. þat is to sein pris þat comeþ of þi deserte foreine gentillesse ne makeþ þe nat gentil. ¶ But certis yif þer be any goode in gentillesse. I trowe it be in al oonly þis. þat it semeþ as þat a maner necessitee be imposed to gentil men. for þat þei ne sholden nat outraien or forliuen fro þe uertues of hire noble kynrede. 2163

## OMNE HOMINUM GENUS IN TERRIS.

**A**l þe linage of men þat ben in erþe ben of semblable burþe. On al one is fadir of þinges. On alone minyst[r]eþ alle þinges. ¶ He 3af to þe sonne hys bemes. he 3af to þe moone hir hornes. he 3af þe men to þe erþe. he 3af þe sterres to þe heuene. ¶ he encloseþ

2139 *foule þinge*—fowl thing

2140 *ne—and*  
*byforne*—byforn

2144 *parties*—partye

*erþe*—Erthes  
*out*—owte

2145 *out*—owhte

2148 *ferm*—ferme

2149 *veyne*—veyn

2150 *if*—yif

2154 *comeþ of*—comth of the

2157 *whiche*—which

2158 *pris*—preys

*comeþ*—comth

2160 *goode*—good

*in* (2)—omitted

2161 *maner*—maiere

2166 *hys*—hyse

2167 *hir*—hyse

wij members þe soules þat comen fro hys heye sete.  
¶ þanne comen alle mortal folk of noble seed. whi  
noyzen 3e or bosten of 3oure eldris ¶ For yif þou  
look[e] 3oure bygynyng. and god 3oure auctour and  
3oure makere. þan is þer no forlyued wyzt but 3if he  
norisse his corage vnto vices and forlete his propre  
burþe. 2175

QUID AUTEM DE CORPORIBUS.<sup>1</sup>

But what shal I seie of delices of body. of whic[h]e  
delices þe desiringes ben ful of anguisse. and þe  
fulfillinges of hem ben ful of penaunce. ¶ How grete  
sekenesse and how grete sorwes vnsuffrable ryzt as a  
manere fruit of wickednesse ben þilke delices wont to  
bryngen to þe bo[d]ies of folk þat vsen hem. ¶ Of  
whiche delices I not what ioye may ben had of hir  
moeuyng. ¶ But þis woot I wel þat who so euere wil  
remembren hym of hys luxuries. he shal wel vndir-  
stonde. þat þe issues of delices ben sorowful and sory.  
¶ And yif þilke delices mowen make folk blisful. þan  
by þe same cause moten þise bestes ben clepid blisful.  
¶ Of whiche bestes al þe entencioun hastep to fulfille  
hire bodyly iolyte. and þe gladnesse of wijf [and]  
children were [an] honest þing. but it haþ ben seid.  
þat it is ouer myche azeins kynde þat children han ben  
founden tormentours to hir fadres I not how many.  
¶ Of whiche children how bityng is enery condicioun.  
It nedep nat to tellen it þe þat hast or þis tyme assaied  
it. and art 3it now anguyssous. In þis approue I þe  
sentence of my disciple Euridippus. þat seide þat he  
þat haþ no children is weleful by infortune. 2197

and adorned the  
sky with stars.  
He breathed into  
man the breath of  
life.

All men spring  
from this illustri-  
ous source.

Why then do they  
boast of pedigree?  
He alone is  
ignoble who sub-  
mits to vice and  
forgets his noble  
origin.

[<sup>1</sup> Read *corporis  
voluptatibus.*]

[The 7<sup>th</sup> prose.]

But what shall I  
say with respect  
to sensual plea-  
sures, the de-  
sire of which is  
full of anxiety,  
and the enjoy-  
ment of them full  
of repentance?

What diseases  
and intolerable  
pains (the merited  
fruits of vice) are  
these delights  
wont to bring  
upon those who  
enjoy them!

I am unable to  
see what joy is to  
be found in the  
gratification of  
them

The remembrance  
of criminal in-  
dulgence brings  
with it bitter  
remorse.

If such things  
make men happy,  
then may brutes  
attain to felicity,  
since by their in-  
stinct they are  
urged to satisfy  
their bodily de-  
lights.

A wife and chil-  
dren do not  
always bring hap-  
piness, for some  
have found tor-  
mentors in their  
own offspring.

I approve of this  
opinion of Eurip-  
ides, that he  
who is childless  
is happy in his  
misfortune.

2169 *fro hys*—fram hyse  
2170 *seed*—sede  
2171 *bosten*—MS. voscen, C.  
bosten  
2172 *look[e]*—loke  
2173 *is*—nis  
2176 *delices*—delites  
*body*—bodye  
2177 *anguisse*—Angwyssh  
2178 *grete*—gret

2179 *sekenesse*—sykenesse  
*grete sorwes*—gret soruwes  
2180 *fruit*—frut  
2182 *had*—MS. hadde, C.  
had  
2183 *wil*—wole  
2184 *hys*—hyse  
2185 *sorowful*—sorwful  
*sory*—sorye  
2186 *make*—makyn

2189 [*and*]—from C.  
2190 [*an*]—from C.  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
*seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
2191 *myche*—mochel  
2192 *many*—manye  
2196 *Euridippus*—Eury-  
dypys; read Euripides  
2197 *haþ*—MS. haþe

## HABET HOC UOLUPTAS.

[The 7<sup>de</sup> Metur.]

Pleasure leaves a pain behind it.

2199

The bee gives us agreeable honey, but try to hold it, and it quickly flies, leaving its sting behind.

Euery delit hap þis. þat it anguisseþ hem wiþ prikkes þat vsen it. ¶ It resemblip to þise flying flies þat we clepen been. þat afre þat þe bee hap shed hys agreeable honies he fleep away *and* styngeþ þe hertes of hem þat ben ysmyte wiþ bytynge ouer longe holdynge. 2202

## NICHIL IGITUR DUBIUM EST.

[The 8<sup>the</sup> prose.] It appears then that happiness is not to be found in the above-mentioned external things.

[\* fol. 19.]

These false ways are perplexed with many evils, as I shall presently show thee. Do you want to amass wealth, then you must take it from your neighbours.

Would you shine in dignities, then you must beg for them and disgrace yourself by a humiliating supplication.

If power be your ambition, you expose yourself to the snares of inferiors.

Do you ask for glory, to be distracted by vexations and so lose all security.

Do you prefer a voluptuous life? Think then that all men will despise him who is a thrall to his body.

They build upon a weak foundation that place bodily delights above their own reason.

Can you surpass the elephant in bulk, or the bull in strength?

Now nis it no doute þan þat þise weyes ne ben a maner mysledynge to blisfulnesse. ne þat þei ne mowe nat leden folke þider as þei byheten to leden hem. ¶ But wiþ how grete harmes þise \*forseide weyes ben enlaced. ¶ I shal shewe þe shortly. ¶ For whi yif þou enforcest þe to assemble moneye. þou most by-reuen hym his moneye þat hap it. and yif þou wilt shynen wiþ dignites. þou most bysechen *and* supplien hem þat ziuen þo dignitees. ¶ And yif þou coueitest by honour to gon by-fore oper folk þou shalt defoule þi self by humblesse of axing. yif þou desiryst power. þou shalt by awaites of þi subgitz anoyously be cast vndir many periles. axest þou glorie þou shalt ben so destrat by aspre þinges þat þou shalt forgone syker-nesse. ¶ And yif þou wilt leden þi lijf in delices. euery whiþt shal dispisen þe *and* forleten þe as þou þat art þral to þing þat is ryzt foule *and* brutel. þat is [to] sein seruauzt to þi body. ¶ Now is it þan wel yseen how lytel *and* how brutel possessioun þei coueiten þat putten þe goodes of þe body abouen hire owen resoun. ¶ For mayst þou sourmounten þise olifuntz in gretnesse or weyzt of body. Or mayst þou ben strengere þan þe bole. Mayst þou ben swifter þan þe tigre. biholde þe

2198 *Euery*—MS. Oquery, C.

Every

2198, 2200 *hap*—MS. haþe*shed hys*—shad hyse2203 *nis*—is2204 *mysledynge* — mysled-  
ynges2205 *folke*—folk2208 *enforcest* — MS. en-  
forced, C. enforcest2209 *hap*—MS. haþe2209 *wilt*—wolt2211 *ziuen*—yeuen2212 *gon*—MS. gone, C. gon*by-fore*—byforu*shalt*—shal2213 *by*—thorw2214 *by*—be*be*—ben2216 *destrat*—MS. destralle,  
C. destrat*forgone*—forgoon2217 *wilt*—wolt2218 *whiþt*—wyht2219 *foule*—fowl

[to]—from C.

2220 *yseen*—seen2221 *brutel*—brotel2222 *owen*—owne2224 *weyzt*—weyhty*strenger*—strengere2225 *swifter*—swyftere*biholde*—by-hold



spaces *and* þe stablenesse *and* þe swyfte cours of þe heuene. *and* stynte somtyme to wondren on foule þinges. þe whiche heuene certys nis nat raper for þise þinges to ben wondred vpon. þan for þe resoun by whiche it is gouerned. but þe shynynge of þi forme þat is to seien þe beaute of þi body. how swiftly passyng is it *and* how transitorie. ¶ Certis it is more flittyng þan þe mutabilite of floures of þe somer sesoun. For so as aristotil telleþ þat yif þat men hadden eyen of a beest þat hizt lynx. so þat þe lokyng of folk myzt[e] percen þoruþ þe þinges þat wiþstonden it. who so lokid þan in þe entrailes of þe body of alcibiades þat was ful fayr in þe superfice wiþ oute. it shulde seme ryzt foule. *and* for þi yif þou semest faire. þi nature ne makip nat þat. but þe desceiuance of þe fieblesse of þe eyen þat loken. ¶ But preise þe goodes of þi body as moche as euer þe list. so þat þou know[e] algates þat what so it be. þat is to seyn of þe goodes of þi body whiche þat þou wondrest vpon may ben destroyed or dessolued by þe hete of a feure of þre dayes. ¶ Of alle whiche forseide þinges I may reducen þis shortly in a somme. ¶ þat þise worldly goodes whiche þat ne mowen nat ziuen þat þei byheten. ne ben nat perfit by þe congregacioun of alle goodes. þat þei ne ben nat weyes ne papes þat bryngen men to blysfulnesse ne maken men to ben blysful.

Art thou swifter than the tiger? Behold the immense extent of the heavens and cease to admire vile or lesser things. Admire what is still more admirable, the consummate wisdom that governs them. How fleeting is beauty! It fades sooner than the vernal flowers. For, as Aristotle says, if a man were lynx-eyed and could look into the entrails of Alcibiades (so fair outwardly) he would find all foul and loathsome.

2238

Thy nature does not make thee seem beautiful, but the imperfect view of thy admirers. Prize bodily perfections as much as you will, yet a three days' fever will destroy them.

2246

Worldly goods do not give what they promise, do not comprise every good, are not the paths to felicity, nor can of themselves make any one happy.

2251

HEU QUE MISEROS TRAMITE.

Alas whiche folie *and* whiche ignoraunce mysledip wandryng wrecches fro þe pape of verrey good. ¶ Certis 3e ne seken no golde in grene trees. ne 3e ne

[The 8th Metur.]  
Alas! how through folly and ignorance do men stray from the path of true happiness!

2227 *styn*te—stynt  
2228 *whiche*—whyh  
2230 *whiche*—wyh  
2231 *seien*—seyn  
2234 *as*—omitted  
2235 *hizt*—hyhte  
*myzt[e]*—myhte  
2237 *alcibiades*—MS. alcidi-  
2238 *fayr*—fayre

2238 *þe*—omitted  
*shulde*—sholde  
2239 *foule*—fowl  
*faire*—fayr  
*ne*—omitted  
2240 *desceiuance of þe*  
*fieblesse*—deceyuable or  
the feblesse  
2242 *moche*—mochel

2242 *know[e]*—knowe  
2243 *þe*—omitted  
*þi body whiche*—the body  
whyh  
2247 *a*—omitted  
2252 *whiche (both)*—whyh  
2253 *pape*—paath  
*good*—goode  
2254 *golde*—gold



Ye do not seek  
gold upon trees  
nor diamonds  
from the vine.  
Ye lay not your  
nets to catch fish  
upon the lofty  
hills.  
The hunter goes  
not to the Tyr-  
rene waters to  
hunt the roe.  
Men know where  
to look for white  
pearls, and for the  
fish that yields the  
purple dye.

2263

They know where  
the most delicate  
of the finny race  
abound and where  
the fierce sea-urchin  
is to be found.  
But where the  
Sovereign Good  
abides blinded  
mortals never  
know, but plunge  
into the earth  
below to look for  
that which has its  
dwelling in the  
heavens.

[\* fol. 19 b.]  
What doom do the  
silly race deserve?  
May they pursue  
such false joys,  
and having ob-  
tained them, too  
late find out the  
value of the true.

gadren [nat] precious stones in þe vines. ne 3e ne  
hiden nat 3oure gynnes in hey3e mountaignes to kachen  
fisse of whiche 3e may maken ryche festes. and yif  
3ow lykeþ to hunte to roos. 3e ne gon nat to þe foordes  
of þe water þat hyzt tyrene. and ouer þis men knowen  
wel þe crikes and þe cauernes of þe see yhidd in þe  
floodes. and knowen eke whiche water is most plentiuous  
of white perles. and knowen whiche water habundeþ  
most of rede purple. þat is to seyen of a maner shel-  
fisse with whiche men dien purple. and knowen  
whiche strondes habounden most of tendre fisses or  
of sharpe fisses þat hyzten echynnys. but folk suffren  
hem self to ben so blynde þat hem ne recchiþ nat to  
knowe where pilk[e] goodes ben yhidd whiche þat þei  
coueiten but ploungen hem in erþe and seken þere  
pilke goode þat sourmounteþ þe heuene þat bereþ þe  
sterres. ¶ what \*preyere may I make þat be digne to  
þe nice pouztis of men. but I preye þat þei coueiten  
ryches and honours so þat whan þei han geten þo  
false goodes wiþ gret trauayle þat þerby þei mowe  
knowen þe verray goodes. 2275

## HACTENUS MENDACIS FORMAM.

[The 9<sup>th</sup> prose.]  
P. I have ben  
describing the  
form of counter-  
feit happiness, and  
if you have con-  
sidered it at-  
tentively I shall  
proceed to give  
you a perfect view  
of the true.  
B. I now see that  
there is no suffi-  
ciency in riches, no  
power in royalty,  
no esteem in  
dignities, nor  
nobility in re-

IT suffisip þat I haue shewed hider to þe forme of  
false wilfulnesse. so þat yif þou look[e] now clerely  
þe ordre of myn entencion requeriþ from hennes forþe  
to shewen þe verray wilfulnesse. ¶ For quod .I. (b) [I.]  
se wel now þat suffisaunce may nat comen by richesse. ne  
power by realmes. ne reuerence by dignitees. ne gentil-  
esse by glorie. ne ioye by delices. and (p) hast þou wel  
knowen quod she þe cause whi it is. Certis me semeþ

2256 *hey3e*—the hye  
*kachen*—kachehe  
2257 *fisse*—fyssh  
2258 *hunte*—honte  
*roos*—Roos  
2259 *hyzt*—hyhte  
2260 *crikes*—brykes  
*yhidd*—MS. yhidde, C. I-  
hyd  
2261, 2262 *whiche*—whyche

2263 *shelisse*—shelle fysh  
2264, 2265 *whiche*—whyche  
2264 *dien*—deyen  
2265 *of*—with  
2266 *echynnys*—MS. eth-  
ynnys, C. Echynnys  
2268 *yhidd*—MS. yhidde, C.  
I-hydd  
2270 *goode*—good  
2271 *make*—maken

2273 *ryches*—Rychesse  
2277 *wilfulnesse*—weleful-  
nesse  
*look[e]*—loke  
*clerely*—clerly [nesse  
2279 *wilfulnesse*—weleful-  
For—For-sothe  
[I.]—from C.  
2280 *richesse*—Rychesses  
2281 *realmes*—Reames

quod .I. þat .I. se hem ryzt as þouȝ it were þoruȝ a litel clifte. but me were leuer knowen hem more openly of þe. Certys quod she þe resoun is al redy ¶ For þilk þing þat symply is on þing wiþ outen ony diuision. þe errour and folie of mankynde departeþ and diuidiþ it. and mislediþ it and transporteþ from verray and perfit goode. to goodes þat ben false and imperfit. ¶ But seye me þis. wenest þou þat he þat haþ nede of power þat hym ne lakkeþ no þing. Nay quod .I. ¶ Certis quod she þou seist aryzt. For yif so be þat þer is a þing þat in any partie be fieble of power. Certis as in þat it most[e]. nedes be nedy of foreine helpe. ¶ Riȝt so it is quod .I. Suffisaunce and power ben þan of on kynde ¶ So semeþ it quod I. ¶ And demyst þou quod she þat a þing þat is of þis manere. þat is to seine suffisaunt and myȝty auȝt[e] to ben despised. or ellys þat it be ryzt digne of reuerences abouen alle þinges. ¶ Certys quod I it nys no doute þat it nis ryzt worþi to ben reuerenced. ¶ Lat vs quod she þan adden reuerence to suffisaunce and to power ¶ So þat we demen þat þise þre þinges ben alle o þing. ¶ Certis quod I lat vs adden it. yif we willen graunten þe soþe. what demest þou þan quod she is þat a dirke þing and nat noble þat is suffisaunt reuerent and myȝty. or ellys þat is ryzt clere and ryzt noble of celebrete of renoun. ¶ Considere þan quod she as we han grauntid her byforne. þat he þat ne haþ ne[de] of no þing and is most myȝty and most digne of honour yif hym nedid any clernesse of renoun whiche clernesse he myȝt[e] nat graunten of hym self. ¶ So þat for lakke of þilke clernesse he myȝt[e] seme febler on any syde or þe

noun, nor joy in carnal pleasures. I have a glimpse of the cause of all this, but I should like a more distinct view. P. The cause is obvious—for that which is by nature one and indivisible human ignorance separates and divides, and reverses the true order of things. Does that state which needs nothing stand in need of power? B. I should say no. P. Right! That which wants power needs external aid. B. That is true! P. Sufficiency and power therefore are of one nature. B. It seems so indeed.

2297

P. Are power and sufficiency to be despised? Are they not rather worthy of universal respect? B. They are doubtless highly estimable. P. Add respect to sufficiency and power, and consider all three as one and the same thing. B. I see no objection to that view. P. But can that be the obscure and ignoble which possesses three such attributes? is it not noble and worthy of a shining reputation? He who is most powerful and worthy of renown—if he lack fame which he cannot give to himself, must (by this defect) seem in some measure more weak and abject. He that is sufficiently mighty and esteemed will have necessarily

2287 þilk—thylke  
on—o  
2290 goode—good  
2291 seye—sey  
haþ—MS. haþe  
2294 fieble—feblers  
2295 most[e]—mot  
2296 helpe—help  
2297 on—o

2298 demyst þou—demesthow  
2299 seine—seyn  
auȝt[e]—owhte  
2300 reuerences—Reuerence  
2302 nis ryzt—is ryht  
2304 alle—al  
2305 willen—wolen  
2306 dirke—dyrk  
2308 clere—cler

2308 of celebrete—by celebrete  
2310 haþ—MS. haþe  
2312 whiche—whyche  
myȝt[e]—myhte  
2314 clernesse—clernesse  
myȝt[e]—myhte  
febler—the feblers

an illustrious name. *B.* I cannot deny it, for reputation seems inseparable from the advantages you have just mentioned.

*P.* Therefore Renown differs in no wise from

2320

the three above-mentioned attributes. And if any one then stands in need of no external aid, can have all he wants, and is illustrious and respected—is not his condition very agreeable and pleasant?

*B.* I cannot conceive how such a one can have grief or trouble. *P.* It must then be a state of happiness; and we may also affirm that sufficiency, power, nobility, differ only in name, but

2330

not in substance. *B.* It is a necessary consequence. *P.* The depravity of mankind then divides that which is essentially indivisible; and, seeking for a part of that which has no parts, they miss the entire thing

[\* fol. 20.]

which they so much desire.

2338

*B.* How is that? *P.* He that seeks riches in order to avoid poverty, is not solicitous about power; he prefers meanness and obscurity, and denies himself many natural pleasures that he may not lessen his heaps of pelf.

more outcaste. *Glosa.* þis is to seyne nay. ¶ For who so þat is suffisaunt myzty *and* reuerent. clernesse of renoun folweþ of þe forseide þinges. he hap it alredy of hys suffisaunce. boice. I may nat quod I denye it. ¶ But I mot graunten as it is. þat þis þing be ryzt celebrable by clernesse of renoun *and* noblesse. ¶ þan folweþ it quod she þat we adden clernesse of renoun to þe þre forseide þinges. so þat þer ne be amonges hem no difference. *and* þis is a consequente quod .I. þis þing þan quod she þat ne hap no nede of no foreine þing. *and* þat may don alle þinges by his strengþes. *and* þat is noble *and* honourable. nis nat þat a myrie þing *and* a ioyful. boice. but wenest quod I þat any sorow myzt[e] comen to þis þing þat is swiche. ¶ Certys I may nat þinke. *P.* ¶ þanne moten we graunt[e] quod she þat þis þing be ful of gladnesse yif þe forseide þinges be soþe. ¶ And also certys mote we graunten. þat suffisaunce power noblesse reuerence *and* gladnesse ben only dyuerse bynames. but hir substaunce hap no diuersite. Boice. It mot nedely be so quod .I. *P.* pilke þinge þan quod she þat is oon *and* simple in his nature. þe wikkednesse of men departiþ it \*diuidiþ it. *and* whan þei enforcen hem to gete partie of a þing þat ne hap no part. þei ne geten hem neiþer þilk[e] partie þat nis none. ne þe þing al hole þat þei ne desire nat. .b. In whiche manere quod .I. *p.* þilke man quod she þat sekeþ rychesse to fleen pouerte. he ne trauayleþ hym nat to for to gete power for he hap leuer ben dirk *and* vile. *and* eke wiþdraweþ from hym selfe many naturel delitz for he nolde lesen þe moneye þat he hap as-

2315 *seyne*—seyn  
2317 *hap*—MS. haþe  
2324 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
2325 *his*—hyso  
2326 *myrie*—mery  
2327 *wenest*—whennes  
2328 *sorow myzt[e]*—sorwe myhte  
2329 *graunt[e]*—graunte  
2331 *be*—ben

2331 *also certys*—certes also  
2333 *hap*—MS. haþe  
2334 *nedely*—nedly  
2335 *þinge*—þing  
2337 *gete*—geten  
2338 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
    *þilk[e]*—þhilke  
2339 *none*—non  
    *hole*—hool  
2340 *whiche*—whych

2341 *rychesse*—Rychesses  
    *fleen*—MS. sleen, C. fleen  
2342 *leuer*—leuer  
2343 *vile*—vyl  
    *selfe*—self  
2344 *delitz*—delices  
    *lesen*—lese  
    *haþ*—MS. haþe



sembled. but certis in þis manere he ne getiþ hym nat  
suffisaunce þat power forlet iþ. *and* þat moleste prekeþ.  
*and* þat filþe makeþ outcaste. *and* þat derknesse hideþ.  
and certis he þat desireþ only power he wast iþ *and*  
scatriþ rychesse *and* dispiseþ delices *and* eke honour  
þat is wiþ out power. ne he ne preiseþ glorie no þing.  
¶ Certys þus seest þou wel þat many þingus failen to  
hym. for he haþ somtyme faute of many necessites.  
*and* many anguysses biten hym ¶ *and* whan he may  
nat don þo defautes away. he forlet eþ to ben myzty.  
*and* þat is þe þing þat he most desireþ. *and* ryzt þus  
may I make semblable resouns of honours *and* of glorie  
*and* of delices. ¶ For so as euery of þise forseide  
þinges is þe same þat þise oþer þinges ben. þat is to  
sein. al oon þing. who so þat euer sekeþ to geten þat  
oon of þise *and* nat þat oþer. he ne geteþ nat þat he  
desireþ. *Boice.* ¶ what seist þou þan yif þat a man  
coueiteþ to geten alle þise þinges to gider. *P.* Certys  
quod she .I. wolde seie þat he wolde geten hym soue-  
reyne blisfulnes. but þat shal he nat fynde in þo þinges  
þat .I. haue shewed þat ne mowe nat zeuen þat þei by-  
heten. *boice.* Certys no quod .I. ¶ þan quod she ne  
sholden men nat by no weye seken blysfulnesse in  
swiche þinges as men wenen þat þei ne mowe  
zeuen but o þing senglely of alle þat men seken. I  
graunt[e] wel quod .I. ne no soþer þing ne may nat  
ben said. *P.* ¶ Now hast þou þan quod she þe forme  
*and* þe causes of false welefulnesse. ¶ Now turne *and*  
flitte þe eyen of þi þouzt. for þere shalt þou seen an oon  
þilk verray blysfulnesse þat I haue byhyzt þee. *b.*  
Certys quod .I. it is cler *and* opyn. þouzt þat it were to  
a blynde man. *and* þat shewedest þou me [ful wel] a

He who lacks power, is pricked with trouble, and rendered an out-cast and obscure by his sordid ways, does not possess sufficiency. He who only aims at power squanders his riches, and despises delights and honours unaccompanied by power. Such a one must be subject to many anxieties. And when he cannot get rid of these evils he ceases to have what he most desired—power. In the same way honour, glory, and pleasure, are all inseparable; he that seeks one without the other will fail to obtain his desires.  
*B.* What then if a man should desire to gain them all at once?  
*P.* He would then indeed  
2361

desire perfect felicity—but can he ever expect to find it in the acquisitions above mentioned, which do not perform what they promise?  
*B.* No, surely!  
*P.* Then happiness is not to be sought in these things which are falsely supposed capable of satisfying our desires?  
*B.* I confess it, and nothing can be more truly affirmed than this. Turn your mind's eye upon the reverse of all this *false felicity* and you will perceive *the true happiness*.  
*B.* It is very clear, and I had a complete view of it when you explained to me the causes of its counterfeit.

2346 *prekeþ*—prykketh  
2347 *derknesse*—dyrknesse  
2349 *scatriþ*—schatereth  
*delices*—delyc3  
2350 *wiþ out*—with owte  
2351 *many*—manye  
2352 *haþ*—MS. haþe

2352 *faute*—defaute  
2353 *may*—ne may  
2354 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
2356 *make*—maken  
2357 *forseide*—MS. sorseide  
2363 *souereyne*—souereyn  
2365 *mowe*—mowen

2368 *wenen*—wene  
*mowe*—mowen  
2370 *graunt[e]*—graunte  
*soþer*—sothere  
2371 *said*—MS. saide, C. sayd  
2376 [*ful wel*]—from C.



True felicity consists in a state of sufficiency, of power, and honour—as well as of a shining reputation and every desirable pleasure: and I must confess that true felicity is that which is bestowed by these advantages, as they are in reality all one and the same.  
*P.* O my nursing, how happy are

2385

you in this conviction, provided you add but one limitation.

*B.* What is that?  
*P.* Thinkest thou that any thing in this world can confer this happiness? (the sovereign good).

*B.* I think not; for nothing can be desirable beyond such a state of perfection.

*P.* These imperfect things above mentioned only confer the shadow of the supreme good, or at most only an imperfect felicity, but they cannot bestow true and perfect happiness.

*B.* I quite agree with you.

*P.* Then, knowing the difference between true and false felicity you must now learn where to look for

2401

this supreme felicity.

*P.* But, as Plato

[\* fol. 20 b.]

says that even in the least things the Divine assistance ought to be implored, what ought we do, to render us worthy of so important a discovery as the true source and seat of the sovereign good?

lytel her byforne. whan þou enforcedest þe to shewe me þe causes of þe false blysfulnesse ¶ For but yif I be bygiled. þan is pilke þe verray perfit blisfulnesse þat perfitly makip a man suffisaunt. my3ty. honourable noble.

and ful of gladnesse. and for þou shalt wel knowe þat I haue wel vndirstonden þise þinges wip inne myne herte. I knowe wel pilke blisfulnesse þat may verrayly zeuen on of þe forseide þinges syn þei ben al oon .I. knowe douteles þat pilke þing is þe fulle of blysfulnesse. *P.*

O my nurry *quod* she by þis oppinioun *quod* she I sey[e] þat þou art blisful yif þou putte pis þer to .þat I shal seine. what is þat *quod* .I. ¶ Trowest þou þat þer be any þing in þis erpely mortal toublyng þinges þat may bryngen þis estat. Certys *quod* I trowe it nat.

and þou hast shewed me wel þat ouer pilke goode þer is no þing more to ben desired. *P.* þise þinges þan

*quod* she. þat is to seyne erpely suffisaunce and power. and swiche þinges eyþer þei semen likenesse of verray

goode. or ellys it semep þat þei zeuen to mortal folk a maner of goodes þat ne ben nat perfit. ¶ But pilke

goode þat is verray and perfit. þat may þei nat zeuen. boice. I. accorde me wel *quod* .I. þan *quod* she for as

moche as þou hast knowen whiche is pilke verray blisfulnesse. and eke whiche pilke þinges ben þat lien

falsly blisfulnesse. þat is to seyne. þat by desceit semen verray goodes. ¶ Now byhouep þe to knowen

\*whennes and where þou mouve seek[e] pilke verray blisfulnesse. ¶ Certys *quod* I þat desijr I gretly and

haue abiden longe tyme to herkene it. ¶ But for as moche *quod* she as it likeþ to my disciple plato in his

book of in thimeo. þat in ry3t lytel þinges men sholde bysechen þe helpe of god. ¶ what iugest þou þat be

2377 *byforne*—by-forn

2378 *blysfulnesse* — MS. blydenesse, C. blysfulnesse

2395 *of*—omitted

2336 *nurry*—norye

2387 *sey[e]*—seye

2388 *seine*—seyn

2399 *þis*—þise

2390 *nat*—nawht

2393 *seyne*—sey

2395 *zeuen*—yeue

2397 *goode*—good

2399 *whiche*—which

2401 *seyne*—seyn

2402 *knowen*—knowe

2403 *seek[e]*—seke

2405 *herkene*—herknen

2407 *sholde*—sholden

2408 *bysechen*—by-shechen

*helpe*—help

[now] to done so þat we may deserue to fynde þe sete of þilke souereyne goode. *B.* ¶ Certys quod .I. I. deme þat we shulle clepen to þe fadir of alle goodes. ¶ For wiþ outen hym nis þer no þing founden aryzt. þou seist a-ryzt quod she. and bygan on-one to syngen ryzt þus.

O QUI PERPETUA.

O þou fadir creatour of heuene *and* of erþes þat gouernest þis worlde by perdurable resoun þat comaundist þe tymes for to gon from tyme þat age had[de] bygynnyng. þou þat dwellest þi self ay stedfast *and* stable *and* ʒiuest alle oþer þinges to ben moeued. ne forein causes necesseden þe neuer to compoune werke of floterynge mater. but only þe forme of souereyne goode y-set wiþ inne [þe] wiþ outen envie þat moeued[e] þe frely. þou þat art alþerfairest beryng þe faire worlde in þi þouzt. formedest þis worlde to þe likkenesse semblable of þat faire worlde in þi þouzt. þou drawest alle þinges of þi souereyne ensampler. *and* comaundedist þat þis worlde perfitlyche ymaked haue frely *and* absolut hyse perfit parties. ¶ þou byndest þe elementz by noumbres proporcionables. þat þe colde þinges mowen accorde wiþ þe hote þinges. *and* þe drye þinges wiþ þe moyst þinges. þat þe fire þat is purest ne fleye nat ouer heye. ne þat þe heynesne ne drawe nat adoun ouer lowe þe erþes þat ben plounged in þe watres. ¶ þou knytttest to-gidre þe mene soule of treble kynde moenyng alle þinges. *and* diuidest it by membres accordyng. ¶ And whan it is þus diuided it haþ assembled a moenyng in two roundes. ¶ It goþ to tourne

*B.* Let us invoke the Father of all things. You are right, said Philosophy, and thus she sang:—  
O Father and Maker of heaven and earth, by whose eternal reason the world is governed, and by whose supreme [The 9<sup>th</sup> Metur.] command Time flows from the birthofages, Thou, firm and unchanged thyself, makest all things else to move! Thy sovereign will to floating matter gave its various forms, impelled by no exterior causes, but by the Idea of the  
2419

Best in thy great mind conceived void of malice. Fairest thyself bearing the world's figure in thy thought, thou didst create the world after that prototype, and dost draw all things from the image of the fair Supreme, and dost command that this world should have perfect parts. By harmonious measures thou dost bind fast the elements, so that there is no discordance between things cold and hot, or between the moist and the dry. That the fire may not fly too high, and that weight may not press the earth and water lower than they are now placed, thou didst join the Middle Soul (of a three-fold nature) moving all things, and then by agreeing

2409 [now]—from C.  
2410 souereyne goode—verray good  
2411 shulle—shollen to—omitted  
2413 on-one—anon  
2415 worlde—world  
2416 from—age—from syn þat age  
had[de]—hadde  
2417 stedfast—stedefast

2418 oþer—oothre  
2419 forein—foreyne werke—werk  
2420 souereyne goode—souereyn good  
2421 y-set—MS. y-sette, C. Isset  
wiþ inne—with in [þe]—the  
wiþ outen—with owte  
moeued[e]—moeuede

2422 alþerfairest — alder-fayrest  
2422-24-26 worlde—world  
2423 likkenesse—lyknesse  
2426 *and* absolut—C. omits  
2427 hyse—hys  
2430 stre—fyr  
fleje—fle  
2431 drawe—drawen  
2435 hap—MS. hape  
2436 goþ—MS. goþe

numbers didst resolve it. When that is done, cut into two orbs, it moves about returning to itself, and then encompassing the profound mind doth by that fair idea turn the heaven. Thou by such causes dost raise all souls and lesser lives, and adaptest them to their light vehicles. Thou sowest them in heaven and earth, and they return to thee by thy kind law like a recoiling flame. O Father, elevate our souls and let them behold thy august throne. Let them behold the fountain of all good. Dispel the mists of sense, remove the weights of earth-born cares, and in thy splendour shine (in our minds). For thou art ever clear, and to the [The 10<sup>th</sup> prose.] good art peace and rest. He who looks on thee beholds beginning support, guide, path and goal, combined! Now that thou hast had a faithful representation of future felicity as well as of the true happiness, I shall show thee in what the Perfection of Happiness consists. Our best plan will be to inquire whether there be in nature such a good as thou hast lately defined, lest we be deceived by the vanity of Imagination and be carried beyond the truth of the matter subjected to our inquiry.

azein to hym owen self. *and* environep a fulle deep pouzt. *and* tournip þe heuene by semblable ymage. þou by euenlyk causes enhaunsest þe soules *and* þe lasse liues *and* ablynge hem heye by lyzt[e] cartes. þou sewest hem in to heuene *and* in to erþe. *and* whan þei ben conuertid to þe by þi benigne lawe. ¶ þou makest hem retorne azeine to þe by azein ledyng fijr. ¶ O fadir yif þou to þi pouzt to stien vp in to þi streite sete. *and* graunte [hym] to enviroune þe welle of good. *and* þe lyzte yfounde graunte hym to ficchen þe clere syztes of hys corage in þe. ¶ *And* scatre þou *and* to-breke [thow] þe weyztēs *and* þe cloudes of erþely heuynesse. *and* shyne þou by þi bryztnes. for þou art clernesse þou art peisible to debonaire folke. ¶ þou þi self art by-gynnyngē. berere. ledere. paþ *and* terme to loke on þe [þat] is oure ende. *Glose.* 2452

QUONIAM IGITUR QUI SCIT.<sup>1</sup> [1 Read que sit.]

FOR as moche þan as þou hast seyn. whiche is þe forme of goode þat nys nat perfit. *and* whiche is þe forme of goode þat is perfit. now trowe I þat it were goode to shewe in what þis perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. *and* in þis þing I trowe þat we sholden first enquere forto witen yif þat any swiche manere goode as pilke goode þat þou hast diffinissed a lytel her byforne. þat is to seine souereyne goode may be founden in þe nature of þinges. For þat veyne ymaginacioun of pouzt ne desceiue vs nat. *and* putte vs oute of þe sopefastnesse of pilke þinge þat is summyttid to vs. þis is to seyne. but it may nat ben denyed þat pilke goode ne is. ¶ *and* þat it nis ryzt as a welle of alle goodes. ¶ For

2437 *owen*—C. omits  
2438 *tournip*—MS. *tournipe*  
2439 *euenlyk*—eueue lyke  
2440 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte  
2442 *benigne*—bygynnyngē  
2444 *yif*—yiuē  
    þi *streite*—the streyte  
2445 [hym]—from C.  
2446 *lyzte*—lyht

2448 [thow]—from C.  
2449 *bryztnes*—bryhtnesse  
2451 *paþ*—MS. *paþe*; *paath*  
2452 [þat]—that  
2453 *whiche*—which [good  
2454 - 55 - 56 - 58 - 59 *goode*—  
2454 *whiche*—whych  
2457 *set*—MS. *sette*, C. *set*  
2460 *seine*—seyne

2460 *souereyne goode*—scue-  
    reyn good  
    *be founden*—ben fownde  
2461 *veyne*—veyne  
2463 *þis is to seyne*—C. omits  
2464 *denyed*—MS. *deuoyd*-  
    ed, C. *denyed*  
    *goode*—good  
2465 *of*—MS. *of* of



al þing þat is cleped *inperfit*. is proued *inperfit* by þe amenusynge of *perfeccioun*. or of þing þat is *perfit*. and her of comeþ it. þat in euery þing general. yif þat. þat men seen any þing þat is *inperfit* \*certys in þilke general þer mot ben *somme* þing þat is *perfit*. ¶ For yif so be þat *perfeccioun* is don away. men may nat þinke nor seye fro whennes þilke þing is þat is cleped *inperfit*. ¶ For þe nature of þinges ne token nat her bygynnyng of þinges amenused and *inperfit*. but it procediþ of þingus þat ben al hool. and absolut. and descendeþ so doune in to outerest þinges and in to þingus empty and wiþ oute fruyt. but as I haue shewed a litel her byforne. þat yif þer be a blisfulnesse þat be frele and vein and *inperfit*. þer may no man doute. þat þer nys som blisfulnesse þat is sad stedfast and *perfit*. b. þis is concludid quod I fermely and soþefastly. P. But considere also quod she in wham þis blisfulnesse enhabiteþ. þe commune acordaunce and conceite of þe corages of men prouep and graunteþ þat god prince of alle þingus is good. ¶ For so as no þing ne may ben þouzt better þan god. it may nat ben douted þan þat [he þat] no þing is better. þat he nys good. ¶ Certys resoun sheweþ þat god is so goode þat it prouep by verray force þat *perfit* goode is in hym. ¶ For yif god ne is swiche. he ne may nat ben prince of alle þinges. for certis som þing possessyng in hym self *perfit* goode sholde ben more þan god. and [it] sholde seme þat þilke þing were first and elder þan god. ¶ For we han shewed apertly þat alle þinges þat ben *perfit*. ben first or þinges þat ben *inperfit*. ¶ And for þi for as moche as [that] my resoun or my proces ne go nat away wiþoute an ende. we ouzt[e] to graunten þat þe souereyne god is ryzt ful of

The sovereign good does exist, and is the source of all other good. When we say that a thing is *imperfect* we [\* fol. 21.] assert that there is something else of its kind *perfect*. Nature takes not her origin from things diminished and imperfect; but, proceeding from an entire and absolute substance, descends into the remotest and most fruitless things. If there be an imperfect and fading felicity there must also be one stable and perfect. But now consider wherein this felicity resides. That God is the governor of all things is proved by the universal opinion of all men. For since nothing may be conceived better

2482

than God, then He who has no equal in goodness must be good. Reason clearly demonstrates (1) that God is good, and (2) that the sovereign good exists in him. If it were not so He could not be the Ruler of all things, for there would be some other being excelling him who possesses the supreme good and who must have existed before Him. And we have already shown that the perfect precedes the imperfect; wherefore, that our reasonings may not run on with infinity, we must confess that the Supreme God is full of perfect and consummate good.

2466 *al þing*—alle thing  
2468 *her of comeþ*—ther of comht  
2470 *somme*—som  
2471 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
2473 *token*—took  
2475 *hool*—hoole  
2476 *doune*—down

2477 *wiþ oute fruyt*—with owten frut  
2490 *stedfast*—stydefast  
2491 *fermely*—MS. fennely, C. fermely  
*soþefastly*—sothfastly  
2496 [*he þat*]—from C.  
*is better*—nis bettere

2488-89-91 *goode*—good  
2489 *swiche*—swych  
2492 [*it*]—from C.  
*seme*—semen  
2493 *elder*—eldere  
2495 [*that*]—from C.  
2496 *proces*—processes  
2497 *ouzt[e]*—owen

And as we have seen that the perfect good is true happiness, it follows that the true felicity resides in the Supreme Divinity. But let us see how we can firmly and irrefragably prove that the Supreme God contains in his own nature a plenitude of perfect and consummate good. If you think that God has received this good from without, then you must believe that the giver of this

2508 good is more excellent than God the receiver. But we have concluded that there is nothing more excellent than God. But if this supreme good is in Him by nature, and is nevertheless of a different substance, we cannot conceive, since God is the author of all things, what could have united these two substances differing one from another. Lastly, a thing which essentially differs from another cannot be the same with that from which it is supposed to differ. Consequently, what in its nature

2522 differs from the chief good cannot be the supreme good. But it would be impious and profane thus to conceive of God, since nothing can excel Him in goodness and worth.

souereyne *perfit* goode. and we han establissed þat þe souereyne goode is verrey blisfulnesse. þan mot it nedes ben [þat verray blysfulnesse is] yset in souereyne god. *B.* þis take I wel *quod* .I. ne þis ne may nat be wiþseid in no manere. ¶ But I *preie* þe *quod* she see now how þou mayst preuen holily and wiþ-ouTEN corrupcioun þis þat I haue seid. þat þe souereyne god is ryzt ful of souereyne goode. [In whych manere *quod* I.] wenest þou ouzt *quod* she þat þis prince of alle þinges haue ytake pilke souereyne good any where þan of hym self. ¶ of whiche souereyne goode men proueþ þat he is ful ryzt as þou myztest þinken. þat god þat hap blisfulnesse in hym self. and þat ilke blisfulnesse þat is in hym were diuers in substaunce. ¶ For yif þou wene þat god haue receyued pilke good oute of hym self. þou mayst wene þat he þat 3af pilke good to god. be more goode þan is god. ¶ But I am byknowen and confesse and þat ryzt dignely þat god is ryzt worþi abouen alle þinges. ¶ And yif so be þat þis good be in hym by nature. but þat it is diuers from [hym] by wenyng resoun. syn we speke of god prince of alle þinges feyne who so feyne may. who was he þat [hath] conioined þise diuers þinges to-gidre. and eke at þe last[e] se wel þat o þing þat is diuers from any þing. þat pilke þing nis nat þat same þing. fro whiche it is vndirstonden to ben diuers. þan folweþ it. þat pilke þing þat by hys nature is dyuers from souereyne good. þat þat þing nys nat souereyne good. but certys þat were a felonous corsednesse to þinken þat of hym. þat no þing nis more worþe. For alwey of alle þinges. þe nature

2498 *goode*—good  
2499 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good  
2500 [þat—*is*]—from C.  
*yset*—MS. ysette, C. set  
2501 *be*—ben  
2501 *wiþseid*—MS. wiþseide, C. withseid  
2503 *wiþ-ouTEN*—with-owte  
2504 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
2505 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good

reyn good  
2505 [*In*—*I*]—from C.  
2506 *ouzt*—awht  
2507 *þan of*—owt of  
2508 *whiche*—whych  
*souereyne goode*—souereyn good  
2509 *hap*—MS. hape  
2510 *þat ilke*—thilke  
2511 *were*—weren  
2514 *goode*—worth

2517 *from*—fro  
[*hym*]—from C.  
2518 *feyne*—faigne  
2519 *feyne*—feigne  
[*hath*]—from C.  
2520 *last[e]*—laste  
2521 *o*—a  
2522 *whiche*—whych  
2524 *from*—fro  
2527 *nis*—is

of hem ne may nat ben better þan his bygynyng.  
¶ For whiche I may concluden by ryȝt uerray resoun.  
þat þilke þat is bygynnyng of alle þinges. þilke same  
þing is good in his substaunce. *B.* þou hast seid ryȝt-  
fully quod .I. *P.* But we han graunted quod she þat  
souereyne good is blysfulnes. þat is soþe quod .I. þan  
quod she mote we nedes graunten *and* confessen þat  
þilke same souereyne goode be god. ¶ Certys \*quod  
.I. I ne may nat denye ne wiþstonde þe resouns pur-  
posed. and I see wel þat it folweþ by strengþe of þe  
premisses. ¶ Loke nowe quod she yif þis be proued  
[yit] more fermely þus. ¶ þat þer ne mowen nat ben  
two souereyne goodes þat ben diuerse amo[n]ges hem  
self. þat on is nat þat þat oþer is. þan [ne] mowen  
neiper of hem ben *perfit*. so as eyþer of hem lakkip to  
opir. but þat þat nis nat *perfit* men may seen apertly  
þat it nis nat souereyne. þe þinges þan þat ben  
souereynely goode ne mowen by no wey ben diuerse.  
¶ But I haue wel conclude þat blisfulnesse *and* god ben  
[the] souereyne goode. For whiche it mot nedes be þat  
souereyne blisfulnesse is souerey[ne] dyuynite. ¶ No  
þing quod I nis more soþefast þan þis ne more ferme by  
resoun. ne a more worþi þing þan god may nat ben  
concluded. *P.* vpon þise þinges þan quod she. ryȝt as  
þise geometriens whan þei han shewed her *proposiciouns*  
ben wont to bryngen in þinges þat þei clepen *porismes*  
or *deklaraciouns* of forseide þinges. ryȝt so wil I ȝeue  
þe here as a corolarie or a mede of coroune. For whi.  
for as moche as by þe getyng of blisfulnesse men ben  
makid blysful. *and* blisfulnesse is diuinite. ¶ þan is  
it manifest *and* open þat by þe getyng of diuinite men  
ben makid blisful. ryȝt as by þe getyng of iustice . . .

In fact, nothing can exist whose nature is better than its origin. We may therefore conclude that the Author of all things is really and substantially the supreme Good. *B.* Most rightly said!

*P.* But you have owned that true felicity is the sovereign good; then you must also

[\* fol. 21 b.] grant that God is that true felicity.

*B.* Your conclusions follow from your premises.

*P.* Let us see whether we cannot prove this more convincingly by considering it in this view, that there cannot be two sovereign goods which differ in themselves.

For it is plain that of the goods that differ one cannot be what the other is; wherefore neither of them

2545

can be perfect where one wants the other. That which is not perfect cannot be the supreme good.

Neither can the chief good be essentially different. But it has been shown that God and happiness are the chief good, wherefore

the sovereign felicity and the Supreme Divinity are one and the same.

Following then the examples of geometers who deduce their consequences

from their propositions, I shall deduce to thee something like a corollary as follows:—Because by the attainment of felicity men become happy, and

2523 *better*—bette  
2529 *whiche*—whych  
2531 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
2533 *soþe*—soth  
2534 *mote*—moten  
2539 *[yit]*—from C.  
2541 *is* (1)—nis

2541 *oper*—othre  
[*ne*]—from C.  
2546 *conclude*—concluded  
2547 [*the*] from C.  
*goode*—good *be*—ben  
2549 *soþefast*—sothfast  
*ferme*—MS. forme, C.

*ferme*  
2552 *proposiciouns*—MS. *proporsious*, C. *proposicions*  
2553 *porismes*—MS. *poeismes*, C. *porysmes*  
2554 *wil*—wole



as felicity is the same as Divinity itself, therefore by the attainment of Divinity men are made happy. But as by the participation of justice or of wisdom men become just or wise, so by partaking of Divinity they must necessarily, and by parity of reason, become gods.

Every happy man then is a god. But by nature there is only *One*; but by participation of Divine essence there may be many gods. But as happiness seems to be an assemblage of many things, ought we not to consider whether these several things constitute conjointly the body of

2574

happiness, or whether there is not some one of these particular things that may complete the substance or essence of it, and to which all the rest have a relation?

*B.* Illustrate this matter by proper examples.  
*P.* As you grant that happiness is a good, you may say the same of all the other goods; for perfect sufficiency is identical with supreme felicity; so is supreme power, likewise high rank, a shining reputation, and perfect pleasure. What say you, then; are all these things, sufficiency, power, and the rest, to be considered as constituent parts of felicity? or are they to be referred to the sovereign good as their source and principal?

*and* by þe getyng of sapiencie þei ben maked wise. ¶ Ryȝt so nedes by þe semblable resoun whan þei han getyn diuinite þei ben maked goddys. þan is euery blisful man god. ¶ But certis by nature. þer nys but oon god. but by þe participaciouns of diuinite þere ne letteþ ne disturbeþ no þing þat þer ne ben many goddes. ¶ þis is quod .I. a faire þing *and* a precious. ¶ Clepe it as þou wolt. be it corolarie or porisme or mede of coroune or declarynges ¶ Certys quod she no þing nis fairer. þan is þe þing þat by resoun sholde ben added to þise forseide þinges. what þing quod .I. ¶ So quod she as it semeþ þat blisfulnesse contenib many þinges. it were forto witen wheþir [þat] alle þise þinges maken or conioignen as a maner body of blysfulnesse by diuersite of parties or [of] membris. Or ellys yif any of alle þilke þingus be swyche þat it acomplise by hym self þe substaunce of blisfulnesse. so þat alle þise oþer þinges ben referred and brouȝt to blisfulnesse. þat is to seyne as to þe chief of hem. ¶ I wolde quod I þat þou makedest me clerly to vndirstonde what þou seist. *and* þat þou recordest me þe forseide þinges. ¶ Haue I nat iuged quod she. þat blisfulnesse is goode. ȝis forsoþe quod .I. *and* þat souereyne goode. ¶ Adde þan quod she þilke goode þat is maked blisfulnes to alle þe forseide þinges. ¶ For þilke same blisfulnesse þat is demed to ben souereyne suffisaunce. þilke self is souereyne power. souereyne reuerence. souereyne clernesse or noblesse *and* souereyne delit. what seist þou þan of alle þise þinges. þat is to seyne. suffisaunce power *and* þise oþer þinges. ben þei þan as membris of blisfulnesse. or ben þei referred *and* brouȝt to souereyne good. ¶ Ryȝt as alle þinges þat ben brouȝt to þe chief of hem.

2563 *oon*—o  
2564 *letteþ*—let  
2566 *faire*—fayr  
2567 *porisme*—MS. pousme,  
C. porisme  
2572 [*þat*]—from C.  
2573 *maner*—manere  
*by*—be

2574 [*of*]—from C.  
2575 *swyche*—swych  
2576 *oþer*—oother  
2577 *seyne*—seyn  
2578 *chief*—chef  
2581 *goode ȝis*—good ȝis  
2582 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good

2583 *goode*—good  
2585 *self*—selue  
2588 *þise*—C. omits  
*seyne*—seyn  
2589 *oþer*—oother  
2591 *brouȝt*—MS. wrouȝt, C. browht

b. I vndirstonde wel *quod* .I. what þou *purposest* to seke. but I *desijr[e]* to herkene þat þou shewe it me.  
*p.* Take now þus þe *discessioun* of þis *questioun quod* she. yif al þise þinges *quod* she weren *membris* to felicite. þan weren þei *diuerse* þat oon fro þat oþer.  
 ¶ And swiche is þe nature of *parties* or of *membris*. þat *dyuerse membris* compounen a body. ¶ *Certis quod* I it haþ wel ben shewed her byforne. þat alle þise þinges ben alle on þing. þan ben þei none *membris quod* she. for ellys it sholde seme þat *blisfulnesse* were conioigned \*al of one *membre* alone. but þat is a þing þat may nat ben doon. þis þing *quod* .I. nys nat doutous. but I abide to herkene þe *remenaunt* of þe *questioun*. þis is *open and clere quod* she. þat alle oþer þinges ben referred *and* brouzt to goode. ¶ For þerfore is *suffisaunce* required. For it is demed to ben good. *and* forþi is power required. for men trowen also þat it be goode. and þis same þing mowe we *pinken and* coueiten of *reuerence and* of *noblesse and* of *delit*. þan is *souereyne good* þe *soume and* þe *cause* of alle þat auzt[e] be desired. forwhi þilke þing þat wip-holdeþ no good in it self ne *semblaunce* of goode it ne may nat wel in no manere be desired ne required. *and* þe *contrarie*. For þouþ þat þinges by hir nature ne ben nat goode algates yif men wene þat þei ben goode zit ben þei desired as þouþ [þat] þei were *verrayly* goode. *and* þerfore is it þat men auzten to wene by ryzt þat *bounte* be *souereyne fyn and* þe *cause* of alle þinges þat ben to requeren. ¶ But *certis* þilke þat is *cause* for whiche men requeren any þing. ¶ it semeþ þat þilke same þing be most desired. as þus yif þat a wyzt wolde ryde for *cause* of *hele*. he ne desireþ nat so mychel þe

B. I see what you are aiming at, and I am desirous to hear your arguments.  
 P. If all these things were members of felicity, they would differ one from another, for it is the property of diverse parts to compose one body. But it has been well shown that all these things are the same and do not differ—therefore they are not parts, for if they were, happiness might be made up of one member—which is absurd and impossible.  
 B. This I doubt not, but I desire to hear the sequel.  
 P. All the things above-mentioned must be tried by  
 2607  
 Good, as the rule and square. Sufficiency, power, &c., are all desired, because they are esteemed a good. Good is the cause why all things are desired. For that which contains no good, either in reality or appearance, can never be desired. On the contrary, things not essentially good are desired because they appear to be real goods. Hence, Good is esteemed as the cause and end of all things that we desire. That which is the cause of our desiring any thing is itself what we chiefly want. If a man desire to ride on account of health—it is not the ride he wants so much as its salutary effects.

2593 *desijr[e]* to herkene—desire for to herkne  
 2594 *Take*—tak  
 2596 *fro*—from  
 2597 *swiche*—swhych  
 2600 *on þing*—othing  
 2602 *one*—on  
 2603 *ben doon*—be don

2604 *herkene*—herknen  
 2605 *clere*—cler  
*oþer*—oothre  
 2606 *goode*—good  
 2609 *goode*—good  
*mowe*—mowen  
 2617 [þat]—from C.  
*were verrayly* — weeren

*verraylyche*  
 2618 *þerfore*—therfor  
*auzten*—owhten  
 2619 *alle*—alle the  
 2620 *whiche*—whych  
 2623 *mychel*—mochel

Since all things are sought after for the sake of God, they cannot be more desirable than the good itself. It has been shown that all the aforesaid things are only pursued for the sake of

2629

happiness—hence it is clear that good and happiness are essentially the same.

B. I see no cause to differ from you.

P. It has been proved that God and happiness are identical and inseparable.

B. That is true.

Therefore the substance of God is also the same as that of the Supreme Good.

[The 10<sup>th</sup> Metur.]

Come hither, all ye that are captives—bound and fettered with the chains of earthly desires;—come to this source of goodness, where you shall find rest and security.

[Chaucer's gloss

2642

upon the Text.<sup>1</sup> Not the gold of Tagus or of Hermus, nor the gems of India, can clear the mental sight from vain delusions, but rather darken it. Such sources of our delight are found in the earth's gloomy caverns,—but the bright light that rules the heavens dispels the darkness of the soul. He who has seen this light will confess that the beams of the sun are weak and dim.

moeuyng to ryden as þe effect of his heele. Now þan syn þat alle þinges ben required for þe grace of good. þei ne ben [nat] desired of alle folk more þan þe same good ¶ But we han graunted þat blysfulnesse is þat þing for whiche þat alle þise oþer þinges ben desired. þan is it þus þat certis only blisfulnesse is required *and* desired ¶ By whiche þing it sheweþ clerely þat good *and* blisfulnesse is al oone *and* þe same substaunce. ¶ I se nat quod I wher fore þat men myzt[en] discorden in þis. *p.* *and* we han shewed þat god *and* verrey blysfulnesse is al oon þing ¶ þat is soþe quod .I. þan mowe we conclude sikerly þat þe substaunce of god is set in þilke same good *and* in noon oþer place. 2636

NUNC OMNES PARITER ETC.

○ Comeþ alle to-gidre now 3e þat ben ycauzt *and* ybounde wiþ wicked[e] cheines by þe deceiuable delit of erpely þinges inhabytynge in 3oure þouzt. here shal ben þe reste of 3oure laboures. here is þe hauene stable in peisible quiete. þis al oone is þe open refut to wreches. *Glosa.* þis is to seyn. þat 3e þat ben com-bred *and* deceyued wiþ worldly affeccions comeþ now to þis souereyne good þat is god. þat is refut to hem þat wolen come to hym. *Textus.* ¶ Alle þe þinges þat þe ryuere Tagus 3iueþ 3ow wiþ his golden[e] grauels. or ellys alle þe þynges þat þe ryuere hermus. 3iueþ wiþ his rede brynke. or þat yndus 3iueþ þat is nexte þe hote *partie* of þe worlde. þat medeleþ þe grene stones (smaragde) wiþ þe white (margarits). ne sholde nat cleren þe lokyng of 3oure þozt. but hidden raþer 3oure blynde corages wiþ inne hire dirkenesse ¶ Alle þat likeþ 3ow here *and* excitip *and* moeueþ 3oure þouztes.

2624 *moeuyng*—moeuyng

2626 [nat]—from C.

2628 *oper*—oother

2630 *clerely*—clerly  
good *and* blisfulnesse—of  
good *and* of blysfulnesse

2631 *oone*—oon

2632 *myzt[en]*—myhten

2634 *oon*—oo

2634 *soþe*—soth

2635 *mowe*—mowen

2636 *set*—MS. sette, C. set

2638 *wicked[e]*—wyckyde

2639, 2640 *here*—her

2640 *hauene*—MS. heuene,  
C. hauene

2641 *al oone*—allone

2643 *worldy*—worldely

2645 *come*—comyn

2646 *golden[e] grauels*—  
goldene grauayles

2647 *þynges*—MS. rynges, C.  
things

*hermus*—MS. herinus, C.  
herynus

2648 *nexte*—next

2649 *worlde*—world



þe erþe haþ noryshed it in hys lowe caues. but þe shynyng by þe whiche þe heuene is gouerned *and* whennes þat it haþ hys strengþe þat chaseþ þe derke ouerþrowyng of þe soule. ¶ And who so euer may knowen þilke lyzt of blisfulnesse. he shal wel seine þat þe white bemes of þe sonne ne ben nat cleer. 2659

## ASSENCIOR INQUAM CUNCTA. Boice.

I assent[e] me quod .I. For alle pise þinges ben strongly bounden wip ryzt ferme resouns. how mychel wilt þou preisen it quod she. yif þat þou knowe what þilke goode is. I wol preise it quod I by price wip outhen ende. ¶ yif it shal bytyde me to knowe also to-gidre god þat is good. ¶ certys quod she þat shal I do þe by verray resoun. yif þat þo þinges þat I haue conclude[d] a litel her by \*forne dwellen oonly in hir first[e] grauntyng. Boice. þei dwellen graunted to þe quod .I. þis is to seyne as who seiþ .I. graunt þi forseide conclusiouns. ¶ Haue I nat shewed þe quod she þat þe þinges þat ben requered of many folke. ne ben nat verray goodes ne perfit. for þei ben diuerse þat oon fro þat oþer. *and* so as eche of hem is lakkyng to oþer. þei ne han no power to bryngen a good þat is ful *and* absolute. ¶ But þan atte arst ben þei verray good whan þei ben gadred to-gidre al in to a forme *and* in to oon wirchyng. so þat þilke þing þat is suffisaunce. þilk same be power *and* reuerence. *and* noblesse *and* mirþe. ¶ And forsoþe but alle pise þinges ben alle o same þing þei ne han nat wher by þat þei mowen ben put in þe noumbre of þinges. þat auzten ben requered or desired. *b.* ¶ It is shewed quod .I. ne her of may þer no man douten. *p.* þe þinges þan quod she þat ne

B. I assent, and am convinced by the force of your arguments.

P. But how greatly would you value it, did you fully know what this good is?

B. I should value it infinitely if at the same time I might attain to the knowledge of God, who is the sovereign good.

[The 11 prose.]

P. I shall elucidate this matter by incontrovertible reasons if thou wilt grant me those things which I have before laid down as conclusions.

B. I grant them all.

P. Have I not shown that the things which the majority of mankind so eagerly

[\* fol. 22 b.]

2668 true and perfect goods, for they differ from one another; and because where one of them is absent the others cannot confer absolute happiness

(or good)? Have I not shown, too, that the true and chief good is made up of an assemblage of all the goods in such a way, that if sufficiency is an attribute of this good, it must at the same time possess

2678 power, reverence, &c. If they be not one and the same, why should they be classed among desirable things?

While these things differ from one another they are not goods;

2654, 2656 *hap*—MS. haþe  
2654 *hys*—hyse  
2656 *chaseþ þe derke* — es-  
chueþ the dyrke  
2657 *euer*—C. omits  
2658 *seine*—seyn  
2660 *assent[e]*—assente  
2662 *mychel*—mochel

2663 *goode*—good  
2664 *price*—prys  
2669 *is*—omitted  
*seyne*—seyn  
2671 *folke*—folkes  
2673 *oþer*—oother  
*eche*—ech  
2675 *absolute*—absolut

2675 *atte arst*—at erste  
2676 *al*—alle  
*a*—O  
2677 *to*—omitted  
*wirchyng*—wyrkyng  
2678 *þilk*—þilke  
2681 *put*—MS. putte, C. put  
*auzten*—owhten

but as soon as they become one then they are made goods.—

Do not they owe their being good to their unity?

B. So it appears.

P. Do you confess that everything that is good becomes such by the participation of the sovereign good or no?

B. It is so.

P. Then you must own that unity and good are the same (for the substance of those things must be the same, whose effects do not naturally differ). B. I cannot gainsay it.

P. Do you not perceive that everything which exists is permanent so long as it preserves its unity—but as soon as it loses this, it is dissolved and annihilated?

2700

B. How so?

P. In the animal creation as long as the soul and the body are united and conjoined in one, this being is called an animal or beast, but when the union is dissolved by the separation of these, the animal perishes and is no longer a beast. The same may be said of man and all other things; they subsist while unity is preserved, but as soon as that is destroyed the things themselves lose their existence.

B. I believe we should find this true in every case.

P. Is there anything which acts naturally that forgoes this desire of existence and wishes for death and corruption?

ben none goodes whan þei ben diuerse. *and* whan þei bygynnen to ben al o þing. þan ben þei goodes. ne comiþ it hem nat þan by þe getyng of unite þat þei ben maked goodes. *b.* so it semeþ *quod* .I. but alle þing þat is good *quod* she grauntest þou þat it be good by participacioun of good or no. ¶ I graunt[e] it *quod* .I. ¶ þan mayst þou graunt[en] it *quod* she by sembleable resoun þat oon *and* good ben o same þing. ¶ For of þinges [of] whiche þat þe effect nis nat naturely diuerse nedys þe substaunce mot ben o same þinge. I ne may nat denye it *quod* I. ¶ Hast þou nat knowen wel *quod* she. þat al þing þat is haþ so longe his dwellyng *and* his substaunce. as longe is it oone. ¶ but whan it forletip to ben oone it mot nedis dien *and* corruppe to-gidre. ¶ In whiche manere *quod* .I. ¶ Ryzt as in beestes *quod* she. whan þe soule *and* þe body ben conioigned in oon *and* dwellen to-gidre it is cleped a beest. *and* whan hire vnite is destroyed by disseuerance þat oon fram þat oþir. þan sheweþ it wel þat it is a dede þing. *and* þat it is no lenger no beste. *and* þe body of a wyzt while it dwelleþ in oon forme by coniunccioun of membris it is wel seyn þat it is a figure of mankynde. *and* yif þe partyes of þe body ben [so] diuide[d] *and* disseuered þat oon fro þat oþir þat þei destroien vnite. þe body forletip to ben þat it was by-forne. ¶ And who so wolde renne in þe same manere by alle þinges he sholde seen þat wiþ outen doute euery þinge is in his substaunce as longe as it is oon. *and* whan it forletip to ben oon it dieþ *and* perissiþ. *boice.* whan I considre *quod* I many þinges I see noon oþer. ¶ Is þer any þing þanne *quod* she þat in as moche as it lyueþ naturely. þat forletip þe appetit or talent of

2684 none—no

2685 al o—alle oon

2686 comiþ—comth

2689 graunt[e]—graunte

2690 mayst þou graunt[en]

mosthow graunten

2692 [of]—from C.

2695 al—alle

hap—MS. hape

2696, 2697 oone—oon

2698 whiche—which

2703 dede—ded

lenger—lengere

beste—beest

2704 while—whil

oon—oo

2706 [so] diuide[d]—so de-  
uydyd

2709 so—omitted

2713 many—manye

hys beynge. *and* desireþ to come to deef *and* to corrupcioun. ¶ yif I considere *quod* I þe beestes þat han any manere nature of willynge or of nillynge I ne fynde no þing. but yif it be constreyned fro wiþ out forþe. þat forletip or dispiseþ to lyue *and* to duren or þat wole his þankes hasten hym to dien. ¶ For euery beest trauayleþ hym to defende *and* kepe þe sauuacioun of lijf. *and* escheweþ deef *and* destruccioun. b. but certys I doute me of herbes *and* of trees. þat is to seyn þat I am in a doute of swiche þinges as herbes or trees þat ne han no felyng soule. ne no naturel wirchynges seruyng to appetite as beestes han wheþer þei han appetite to dwellen *and* to duren. ¶ Certis *quod* she ne þer of þar þe nat doute. ¶ Now look vpon þise herbes *and* þise trees. þei waxen firste in swiche place as *ben* couenable to hem. in whiche place þei ne mowen nat some dien ne dryen as longe as hire nature may defenden hem. ¶ For some of hem waxen in feldes *and* some in mountaignes. *and* opir waxen in mareis. [*A leaf lost here, and supplied from C.*] 2735 [*and* oothre cleuyn on Roches / *and* soume waxen plentyuos in sondes / *and* yif þat any wyht enforce hym to beryn hem in to oother places / they wexen drye // For nature yeueth to euery thing þat / þat is conuenient to hym *and* trauaylith þat they ne dye nat as longe as they han power to dwellyn *and* to lyuen // what woltow seyn of this / þat they drawen alle hyr norysshynges by hyr rootes / ryht as they haddyn hyr Mowthes I.-plounged with in the erthes / *and* shedyn by hyr maryes (i. medullas) hyr wode *and* hyr bark / *and* what woltow seyn of this þat thilke thing / þat is ryht softe as the marye (i. sapp) is / þat is alwey hidd in the feete al with inne *and* þat it is defendid fro with owte by the stidefastnesse of wode // *and* þat the vttereste bark is put ayenis the des-

B. I do not find any creature endowed with volition, which, of itself and without constraint, renounces or despises life and self-preservation or willingly hastens to destruction. But with regard to herbs and trees, I am doubtful whether

2722 ther I ought to have the same opinion of them, for they have no sensitive soul, nor any natural volition like animals. P. There is no cause for doubt in respect to these. Herbs and trees first choose a convenient place to grow in, where, agreeably to their respective natures, they are sure to thrive, and are in no danger of perishing; for some grow on plains, some on mountains, &c.; and if you try to transplant them, they forthwith wither and die. To everything that vegetates, nature gives what is needful for its subsistence, and takes care that they should not perish before their time. Need I tell you that plants are nourished by their roots (which are so many mouths hid in the earth), and diffuse strength throughout the whole plant, as through their marrow? And further, it is admirably contrived that the pith, the most tender part of plants, is hid in the middle of the trunk, surrounded with hard and solid wood, and with an outer coat of bark to ward off the storms and weather.

2718 *willynge*—wylnynge  
or—*and*  
2719 *þing*—beest  
out forþe—owte forth

2720 *lyue*—lyuen  
2723 *of lijf*—of hys lyf  
2726 *soule*—sowles  
2727 *appetite*—appetites

2729 *look*—loke  
2730 *waxen firste*—wexen  
2733, 2734 *some*—som [fyrst  
2734 *opir*—oothre



Admire, too,  
the diligence

2751  
of nature in propagating plants by a multiplicity of seeds, which are as a foundation for a building, not to remain for a time, but as it were for ever. Things inanimate incline to what is most suitable to their beings, and to preserve continuance. For why should the flame mount upwards by lightness, and the earth tend towards its centre by gravity

2761  
(weight), unless these motions were agreeable to their respective natures? What ever is agreeable to the nature of a thing preserves it. So what is contrary to its nature destroys it. Dense bodies, such as stones, resist an easy separation of parts; whereas the particles of liquid or flowing things, such as air and water, are easily separated and soon reunited.

2771  
Fire avoids and utterly refuses any such division. I am not now treating of the voluntary motion of a conscious soul, but of the natural intention and instinct. We swallow our meat without thinking of it, and we draw our breath in sleep without perception. The love of life in animals is not derived from an intellectual will, but from natural principles

2781  
implanted in them. For the will, induced by powerful reasons,

tempraunce of the heuene / as a defendowr myhty to suffren harm / *and* thus certes maystow wel sen / how gret is the diligence of nature / For alle thinges renouelen *and* pupllisen hem *with* seed .I.-multiplied / ne ther nis no man þat ne wot wel þat they ne ben ryht as a fundament *and* edyffice for to duren / nat only for a tyme / but ryht as for to duren perdurablely by generacyoun // *and* the thinges ek þat men wenen ne hauen none sowles / ne desire they nat ech of hem by sem[*b*]lable resoun to kepyn þat that is hirs / þat is to seyn þat is acordynge to hyr nature in conseruacioun of hyr beynge *and* endurynge // For wher for elles berith lythnesse the flaumbes vp / *and* the weyhte presseth the erthe a-doun // but For as moche as thilke places and thilke moeuynges ben couenable to euerich of hem // *and* forsothe euery thing kepith thilke þat is acordynge *and* propre to hym // ryht as thinges þat ben contraries *and* enemys corompen hem // *and* yit the harde thinges as stoones clyuen *and* holden hyr partyes to gydere ryht faste *and* harde / *and* deffenden hem in withstondenge þat they ne departe nat lyhtly a twyne // *and* the thinges þat ben softe *and* fletynge as is water *and* Eyr they departyn lyhtly // *and* yeuen place to hem þat brekyn or deuyden hem // but naþeles they retornen sone ayein in to the same thinges fro whennes they ben arraced // but fyr [fleeth] *and* refuseth alle deuysyoun / ne I. ne trete nat heere now of weleful moeuynges of the sowle þat is knowynge // but of the naturel entencioun of thinges // As thus ryht as we swolve the mete þat we resseyuen *and* ne thinke nat on it / *and* as we drawen owre breth in slepynge þat we wite it nat whil we slepyt // For certes in the beestys the loue of hyr lyuynges ne of hyr beeinges ne comth nat of the wilnynges of the sowle // but of the bygynnyngis of nature // For certes thorw constreynynge causes / wil desireth *and* embraceth ful

2753 *pupllisen*—H. publisshen)

2755 *edyffice*—MS. edyffite

2755 *a tyme*—H. oon) tyme

2758 *that*—H. omits

*hirs*—H. his

2774 [fleeth]—from H.

2775 *weleful*—H. wilfulle

2779 *slepyt*—H. slepen

ofte tyme / the deth þat nature dredith // that is to seyn  
 as thus that a man may ben constreynyd so by som  
 cause that his wil desireth and taketh the deth which  
 þat nature hateth *and* dredeth ful sore // And som tyme  
 we seeth the contrarye / as thus that the wil of a wight /  
 destorbeth *and* constreyneth þat þat nature desireth / *and*  
 requereth al-wey // that is to sein the werk of generacioun /  
 by the whiche generacioun only / dwelleth *and* is sus-  
 tenyd the longe durablete of mortal things // And thus  
 this charite and this Loue þat euery thing hath to hym  
 self ne comth nat of the moeuynge of the sowle / but of  
 the entencioun of nature // For the puruyance of god  
 hat yeuen to things þat ben creat of hym / this þat is  
 a ful gret cause / to lyuen *and* to duren / for which they  
 desiren naturelly hyr lyf as longe as euer they mowen //  
 For w[h]ych thou maist nat drede by no manere / that  
 alle the things / that ben anywhere / that they ne re-  
 queren naturelly / the ferme stablenesse of *perdurable*  
 dwellynge / *and* ek the eschuyng of destruccyon // B //  
 now confesse I. wel *quod* I. that I. see wel now certeynly /  
 with owte dowtes / the things that whylom semeden  
 vncerteyn to me / P. // but *quod* she thilke thyng þat  
 desireth to be *and* to dwellyn *perdurablely* / he desireth  
 to ben oon // For yif þat that oon weere destroyed // certes  
 beinge ne shulde ther non dwellyn to no wiht // that  
 is soth *quod* I. // Thanne *quod* she desirin alle things  
 oon // .I. assente *quod* .I. // *and* I haue shewyd *quod* she  
 that thilke same oon is thilke that is good // B // ye for-  
 sothe *quod* I. // Alle things thanne *quod* she requyren  
 good // And thilke good thanne [þow] maist descryuen  
 ryht thus // Good is thilke thing þat euery wyht de-  
 sireth // Ther ne may be thowht *quod* .I. no moore  
 verray thing / for either alle things ben referred *and*  
 browht to nowht / *and* floteryn with owte gouernour

sometimes  
 chooses and em-  
 braces death, al-  
 though nature  
 dreads and abhors  
 it. And, on the  
 contrary, we see  
 that concupi-  
 sence (by which  
 alone the human  
 race is perpetu-  
 ated) is often re-  
 strained by the  
 will. Self-love  
 possessed by every  
 creature is not the  
 2791

product of voli-  
 tion, but proceeds  
 from a natural im-  
 pression or inten-  
 tion of nature.  
 Providence has  
 implanted in all  
 created things an  
 instinct, for the  
 purpose of self-  
 preservation, by  
 which they desire  
 to prolong exist-  
 ence to its utmost  
 limits. Doubt not,  
 therefore, that  
 everything which  
 2799

exists desires ex-  
 istence and avoids  
 dissolution.

B. You have made  
 those things per-  
 fectly plain and in-  
 telligible, which be-  
 fore were obscure  
 and doubtful.

P. That which de-  
 sires to subsist  
 desires also to  
 retain its unity  
 for if this be taken  
 away it cannot  
 continue to exist.

2807

B. That is very  
 true!

P. All things then  
 desire one thing—  
 unity.

B. They do.

P. Unity then is  
 the same as good.

B. Yes.

P. Thus all  
 things desire good  
 —and it is one

2813

and the same good  
 that all creatures  
 desire.

B. Nothing is  
 more true. For  
 either all things  
 must be reduced  
 to nothing (or  
 have no relation

2798 *seeth*—H. seen)  
*wil*—H. wille  
 2792 *And*—H. as

2796 *hat*—H. haue  
 2800 *the*—H. þo  
 2806 *perdurablely*—H. per-

durably  
 2807 *destroyed*—H. destrued  
 2811 *thilke* (1)—H. ilke

to anything else), and, destitute of a head, float about without control or order; or if there be anything to which all things tend, that must be the supreme good. P. I rejoice greatly, my dear pupil, that you so clearly apprehend this truth, of which but just now you were ignorant.

2825

B. What was that?

P. The *End of all things*. And this is what every one desires; but we have shown that *good* is the thing desired by all, therefore *Good* is the *End of all things*.

2832

despoiled of oon / as of hir propre heued / or elles yif ther be any thinge / to which þat alle thinges tenden *and* hyen / that thing moste ben the souereyn good of alle goodes / P /. thanne seyde she thus // O my norry *quod* she I haue gret gladnesse of the // For thow hast fished in thin herte the myddel sothfastnesse // that is to seyn the prykke // but this thing hath ben descouered to the / in that thow seydst þat thow wystem nat a lytel her by-forn // what was that *quod* I. // That thow ne wystem nat *quod* she whych was the ende of thinges // and Certes that is the thing þat euery wiht desireth // and for as mochel as we han gaderid / *and* comprehendyd that good is thilke thing that is desired of alle / thanne moten we nedes confessun / that good is the fyn of alle thinges.

## QUISQUIS PROFUNDA MENTE.

[The. 11. Metrum.]

He who seeks truth with deep research and is unwilling to go wrong, should collect his slumbering thoughts, and turn the inner light upon the soul itself.

The knowledge that he seeks without he will find treasured up in the recesses of the mind.

2841

The light of Truth will disperse Error's dark clouds, and shine forth brighter than the sun. [Chaucer's gloss.]

2847

Who so that sekith soth by a deep thought And coueyteth nat to ben deseyuyd by no mys-weyes // lat hym rollen *and* trenden with Inne hym self / the Lyht of his inward syhte // And lat hym gadere ayein enclynynge in to a compas the longe moeuynges of hys thowhtes / And lat hym techen his corage that he hath enclosed *and* hyd / in his tresors / al þat he compaseth or sekith fro with owte // And thanne thilke thing that the blake cloude of errour whilom hadde y-couered / shal lyhten more clerly thanne phebus hym self ne shyneth // Glosa // who so wole seken the dep[e] grunde / of soth in his thowht / *and* wol nat be deceuyd by false proposiciouns / that goon amys fro the trouthe // lat hym wel examine / *and* rolle with inne hym self the nature *and* the propretes of the thing // and lat hym yit eft sones examine *and* rollen his thowhtes by good deliberacioun

2818 heued or elles—H. hede  
or els  
2820 hyen—H. hyen) to  
moste—H. must

2838 his—H. bis  
that—H. and þat  
2841 blake—H. blak  
hadde y-couered—H. had

couered  
2842 lyhten—H. light  
2843 dep[e]—C. dep, H. depe  
2847 thing—H. bynges



or that he deme // and lat hym techen his sowle that it 2849  
 hat by naturel pryncyplis kyndeliche y-hyd *with* in  
 it self alle the trowthe the whiche he ymagynith to ben [Chaucer's gloss]  
 in thinges *with* owte // And thanne alle the dyrknesse of  
 his mysknowynge shal seen more euydently to [pe]  
 syhte of his vnderstondynge thanne the sonne ne semyth 2854  
 to [pe] syhte *with* owte forth / For certes the body  
 bryngynge the weyhte of foryetynge / ne hath nat chasyd  
 owt of yowre thowhte al the clernesse of yowre knowyng //  
 For certeynly the seed of sooth haldith *and* clyueth  
*with* in yowre corage / *and* it is a-waked *and* excited by  
 the wynde *and* by the blastes of doctryne // For where  
 for elles demen ye of yowre owne wyl the ryhtes whan  
 ye ben axed // but yif so were *pat* the noryssynges of  
 resoun ne lyuede .I.-plowngyd in the depthe of yowre  
 herte // this [is] to seyn how sholden men demen *pe*  
 sooth of any thing *pat* weere axed / yif ther neere a  
 Roote of sothfastnesse *pat* weere yplowngyd *and* hyd in 2861  
 the nature[l] pryncyplis / the whiche sothfastnesse  
 lyued *with* in the depnesse of the thowght // *and* yif  
 so be *pat* the Muse *and* the doctryne of plato syngyth  
 sooth // al *pat* euery whyht lerneth / he ne doth no  
 thing elles thanne but recordeth as men recordyn thinges  
*pat* ben foryetyng. 2866  
 2872

For when the body enclosed the soul and cast obliuion o'er its powers it did wholly exterminate the heaven-born light. The germs of truth were latent within, and were fanned into action by the gentle breath of learning.

Were not truth implanted in the heart, how could man distinguish right from wrong?

So, if what Plato taught is true, 'to learn is no other than to remember what had been before forgotten.'

TUM EGO PLATONI INQUAM. *Med 35 § 2*

¶ Hanne seide I thus // I acorde me gretly to plato / for  
 thow remenbrist *and* recordist me these thinges yit]  
 \* *pe* seconde tyme. *pat* is to seyn. first whan I lost[e] my  
 memorie by *pe* contagiouȝ coniunccioun of *pe* body wip  
*pe* soule. *and* eftsones afterward whan I lost[e] it con-  
 founded by *pe* charge *and* by *pe* burden of my sorwe.  
 ¶ And þan sayde she þus. ¶ If þou look[e] quod she  
 firste *pe* þinges *pat* þou hast graunted it ne shal nat

[The .12. prose.]  
 B. I am quite of Plato's opinion, for you have now a second time recalled these things \* [Addit. MS. 10, 340, fol. 23.] to my remembrance which had been forgotten, first by the contagious union of soul and body, and afterwards by the pressure of my afflictions.  
 P. If you will reflect upon the con-

2363 *depthe*—H. depe  
 2364 [*is*]—from H.  
 sholden—H. shulde

2367 *nature*[l]—H. naturelle  
 2375, 2377 *lost*[e]—loste  
 2378 *burden*—burdene

2379 *look*[e]—looke  
 2380 *firste*—fyrst

cessions you have already made, you will soon call to mind that truth, of which you lately confessed your ignorance.

*B.* What is that?

*P.* It was, by what power the world is governed.

*B.* With regard to that, I own I confessed my ignorance, but though I now remorsefully see what you in-  
ter, yet I wish for further explanation from you.

*P.* You acknowledged a little while ago that this world was governed by God?

*B.* I still cling to this opinion, and will give you my reasons for this belief. The discordant elements of this world

2895

would never have assumed their present form unless there had been a wise Intelligence to unite them; and even after such a union, the joining of such opposites would have disunited and ruined the fabric made up of them, had not the same conjoining hand kept them together. The order that reigns throughout nature could not proceed so regularly and uniformly if there were not a Being, unchangeable and steadfast, to order and dispose so great a diversity of changes. This Being, the creator and ruler of all things, I call God.

*P.* As thy sentiments on these

ben ryzt feer þat þou ne shalt remembren þilke þing þat þou seidest þat þou nistest nat. what þing quod I. ¶ by whiche gouerment quod she þat þis worlde is gouerned. Me remembriþ it wel quod I. and I confesse wel þat I ne wist[e] it nat ¶ But al be it so þat I see now from afer what þou purposest ¶ Al gates I desire zit to herkene it of þe more pleynely. ¶ þou ne wendest nat quod she a litel here byforne þat men sholden doute þat þis worlde is gouerned by god. ¶ Certys quod I ne zitte doute I it nauzt. ne I nil neuer wene þat it were to doute. as who seiþ. but I wot wel þat god gouerneþ þis worlde. ¶ And I shal shortly answer þe by what resouns I am brouzt to þis. ¶ þis worlde quod I of so many dyuerse and contrarious parties ne myzten neuer han ben assembled in o forme. but yif þere ne were oon þat conioigned so many[e] diuerse] þinges. ¶ And þe same diuersite of hire natures þat so discordeden þat oon fro þat oþer most[e] departen and vnoignen þe þinges þat ben conioigned. yif þere ne were oon þat contened[e] þat he haþ conioigned and ybounde. ne þe certain ordre of nature ne sholde. nat brynge furþe so ordinee moeuyng. by places. by tymes. by doynge. by spaces. by qualites. yif þere ne were oon þat were ay stedfast dwellynge. þat ordeyned[e] and disposed[e] þise diuersites of moeuynges. ¶ and þilke þinge what so euer it be. by whiche þat alle þinges ben maked and ylad. I clepe hym god þat is a worde þat is vsed to alle folke. þan seide she. syn þou felest þus þise þinges quod she. I trowe þat I haue lytel more to done. þat þou myzty of

2833 *whiche*—which

*gouernment*—gouernment

*worde*—wordyl

2835 *wist[e]*—wiste

2837 *pleynely*—pleynly

2838 *here byforne*—her byforne

2839 *worlde is*—world nis

2890 *zitte doute* — yit ne

*dowte*

*nil*—nel

2832 *wot*—MS. wote, C. wot

2892, 2894 *worlde*—world

2893 *answere*—answren

2894 *many*—manye

2895 *myzten*—myhte

2896 *þere*—þer

*many[e]*—manye

2897 [*diuerse*]—from C.

*hire*—hir

2898 *most[e]*—moste

2900 *þere*—þer

*contened[e]*—contenede

*haþ*—MS. haþe

2902 *furþe*—forth

*ordinee moeuyng*—ordene

*moeuynges*

2904 *þere*—þer

*stedfast*—stidefast

2905 *ordeyned[e]*—ordeynede

*disposed[e]*—disponede

2907 *whiche*—which

*ben*—be

*ylad*—MS. yladde, C. I-ladd

2908 *worde*—word

*folke*—foolik

wilfulnesse hool *and* sounde ne se eftsones þi contre.  
¶ But lat vs loken þe þinges þat we han purposed her-  
byform. ¶ Haue I nat noumbred *and* seid quod she  
þat suffisaunce is in blisfulnesse. *and* we han accorded  
þat god is *and* þilke same blisfulnesse. ¶ yis forsoþe quod  
I. *and* þat to gouerne þis worlde quod she. ne shal he  
neuer han nede of none helpe fro wiþoute. for ellys yif  
he had[de] nede of any helpe. he ne sholde not haue  
[no] ful suffisaunce. 3is þus it mot nedes be quod I.  
¶ þan ordeyneþ he by hym self al oon alle þinges quod  
she. þat may nat ben denied quod I. ¶ And I haue  
shewed þat god is þe same good. ¶ It remembreþ me  
wel quod I. ¶ þan ordeineþ he alle þinges by þilke  
goode quod she. Syn he whiche we han accorded to  
ben good gouerneþ alle þingus by hym self. *and* he is a  
keye *and* a stiere by whiche þat þe edifice of þis worlde  
is ykept stable *and* wiþ oute corrupynge ¶ I accorde  
me gretly quod I. *and* I aperceiuede a litel here byform  
þat þou woldest seyne þus. Al be it so þat it were by  
a þinne suspecion. I trowe it wel quod she. ¶ For as  
I trowe þou leedest nowe more ententify þine eyen to  
loken þe verray goodes ¶ but napeles þe þinges þat I  
shal telle þe zit ne sheweþ nat lasse to loken. what is  
þat quod I. ¶ So as men trowen quod she *and* þat  
ryztfully þat god gouerneþ alle þinges by þe keye of his  
goodnesse. ¶ And alle þise same þinges as I [haue]  
tauzt þe. hasten hem by naturel entencion to comen  
to goode þer may no man douten. þat þei ne ben  
gouerned uoluntariely. *and* þat þei ne conuerten [hem]  
nat of her owen wille to þe wille of hire ordenour. as  
þei þat ben accordyng *and* enclinyng to her gouernour

points are so just I have but little more to do—for thou mayest be happy and secure, and revisit thy own country. But let us reflect a little more upon these matters. Did we not agree that *Sufficiency* is of the nature of true happiness? And have we not seen that God is that true felicity, and that He needs no external aid nor instruments? For if he should, he would not be self-sufficient. And he directs all things by himself alone?  
B. It cannot be gainsaid.  
P. I have shown that God is the chief good; God must, therefore, direct and order all things by good, since he governs them by himself, whom we have proved to be the *supreme good*,  
2928  
and he is that helm and rudder, by which this machine of the world is steadily and securely conducted. B. I entirely agree to this, and partly anticipated your remarks. P. I believe it; for your eyes are now more intent upon these great truths relating to true felicity; but what I am going to say is not less open to your view.  
B. What is that?  
P. As we believe that God governs all things by his goodness, and that all things have a natural tendency towards the *good*, can it be doubted but that they all voluntarily sub-

2911 *wilfulnesse* — welefulnesse  
2912 *han*—ha  
2913 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
2916 *worlde*—world  
2917 *none helpe*—non help  
2918 *had[de]*—hadde  
      *helpe*—help  
2919 [no]—from C.  
2920 *al oon*—allone

2921 *ben denied*—be denyed  
2924, 2926 *whiche*—which  
2925 *ben*—be  
2926 *worlde*—world  
2928 *gretly*—gretely  
      *here*—her.  
2929 *seyne*—seye  
2931 *nowe*—now  
2932 *napeles*—nat[h]les  
2935 *ryztfully*—MS. on ryzt-

fully  
2936 [*haue*]—from C.  
2938 *goode*—good  
2939 [*hem*]—from C.  
2940 *nat*—omitted  
      *her*—hir  
      *owen*—owne  
      *wille (both)*—wil  
      *hire*—hyr  
2941 *her*—hyr



[\* Fol. 23 b.]  
mit to the will  
and control  
of their ruler?  
B. It cannot be  
otherwise. There  
would be no safety  
for those who  
obey, if the discord  
of a portion were  
allowed. P. Is  
there anything  
that follows the

2948

dictates of nature  
that seeks to  
counteract the will  
of God? B. No.  
P. If there should  
be any such, it  
could not pre-  
vail against  
him, who is su-  
premely happy  
and consequently  
omnipotent.  
Then there is  
nothing that  
either will or can  
withstand this  
supreme good?  
B. Nothing,  
certainly.

P. It is then the  
supreme good that

2958

governs and  
orders all things'  
powerfully and  
benignly.

B. I am delighted  
with your *conclu-  
sions*, but much  
more with your  
*language*; so that  
fools may be  
ashamed of their  
objections to the  
divine govern-  
ment.

[Chaucer's gloss.]  
P. You have read  
the Poets' fables,

2966

how the Giants  
stormed heaven—  
how they were re-  
pulsed and  
punished accord-  
ing to their  
deserts; but may  
we not compare  
our reasons to-  
gether, for by so  
doing some clear  
spark of truth may  
shine forth?

2943 *realme*—Reaume*seme*—semen2945 *pere*—ther2947 *gone a zeyne*—goon ayein2948 *enforced[e]*—enforcede*myzt[e]*—myhte*auayle*—auaylen2949 *a zeyns*—a-yenis2951 *outerly*—owtrely*myzt[e]*—myhte*auaylen*—MS. aualeyne,

C. auaylen

*hym*—hem*pere*—ther2952 *wol*—wole*wipstonde*—with-stondyn*his souereyne*—his soue-2955 *softly*—softitely [reyn2957 *sommes*—somme

[the]—from C.

2959 *last[e]*—laste2960 *greet[e]*—grete2960, 2963 *auzten*—owhten2961 *seyne*—seyn2965 *of hem*—of it*herd*—MS. herde, C. herd2967 *disposed[e]*—desposede2968 *seyne distroied[e]*—seyn

destroyede

2971 *swiche*—swych*some*—som2972 *soþe*—soth*list*—liste

and her kyng. ¶ It mot nedys be so quod. I. \* ¶ For þe realme ne sholde not seme blisful zif þere were a zok of mysdrawynges in diuerse parties ne þe sauynge of obedient þinges ne sholde nat be. þan is þere no þing quod she þat kepib hys nature: þat enforceþ hym to gone a zeyne god. ¶ No quod. I. ¶ And if þat any þing enforced[e] hym to wipstonde god. myzt[e] it auayle at þe laste a zeyns hym þat we han graunted to ben al myzty by þe ryzt of blisfulnesse. ¶ Certis quod I al outerly it ne myzt[e] nat auaylen hym. þan is þere no þing quod she þat eyþer wol or may wipstonde to þis souereyne good. ¶ I trowe nat quod. I ¶ þan is þilke þe souereyne good quod she þat alle þingus gouerneþ strongly and ordeyneþ hem softly. þan seide I þus. I delite me quod I nat oonly in þe endes or in þe sommes of [the] resouns þat þou hast concludid and proued. ¶ But þilke wordes þat þou vvest deliten me moche more. ¶ So at þe last[e] foolles þat somtyme renden greet[e] þinges auzten ben asshamed of hem self. ¶ þat is to seyne þat we foolles þat reprehenden wickedly þe þingus þat touchen goddes gouernaunce we auzten ben asshamed of oure self. As I þat seide god refuseþ oonly þe werkes of men. and ne entremetiþ nat of hem. p. þou hast wel herd quod she þe fables of þe poetes. how þe geauntes assailden þe heuene wip þe goddes. but for soþe þe debonaire force of god disposed[e] hem so as it was worþi. þat is to seyne distroied[e] þe geauntes. as it was worþi. ¶ But wilt þou þat we ioynen togedre þilke same resouns. for perauenture of swiche coniunccioun may sterten vp some faire sperkele of soþe ¶ Do quod I as þe list. wenest þou quod she

þat god ne is almyȝty. no man is in doute of it. Certys quod I no wyȝt ne defendiþ it if he be in hys mynde. but he quod she þat is al myȝty þere nis no þing þat he ne may do. þat is soþe quod I. May god done yuel quod she. ¶ Syn þat he ne may not done yuel þat may done alle þinges. scornest þou me quod. I. or ellys pleyest þou or deceiuest þou me. þat hast so wouen me wiþ þi resouns. þe house of didalus so entrelaced. þat it is vnable to ben vnaced. þou þat oþer while entrest þere þou issest and oþer while issest þere þou entrest. ne fooldest þou nat to gidre by replicacioun of wordes a maner wondirful cercle or enviroynunge of symplidite deuyne. ¶ For certys a litel her byforne whan þou bygunne atte blisfulnesse þou seidest þat it is souereyne good. and seidest þat it is set in souereyne god. and þat god is þe ful[le] blisfulnesse. for whiche þou ȝaf[e] me as a couenable ȝifte. þat is to seyne þat no wyȝt nis blisful. but yif he be good al so þer wiþ and seidest eke þat þe forme of goode is þe substaunce of god. and of blisfulnesse. and seidest þat þilke same oone is þilke same goode þat is requered and desired of al þe kynde of þinges. and þou proeuedest in disputynge þat god gouerneþ alle [the] þinges of þe worlde by þe gouernementys of bountee. and seydest þat alle þinges wolen ybeyen to hym. and seidest þat þe nature of yuel nis no þing. and þise þinges ne shewedest þou nat wiþ no resouns ytake fro wiþoute but by proues in cercles and homelyche knowen. ¶ þe whiche proeues drawn to hem self hir feiþ and hir accorde eueriche [of] hem of oþer. þan seide she þus. I ne scorne þe nat ne pleye ne desseyue

B. As you please.  
P. Is God omnipotent?  
B. No one doubts it.

P. If he is almighty, there are, then, no limits to his power?

B. He can doubtless do all things.

P. May God do evil? B. No.

P. Is evil nothing, since God, who is almighty, cannot do it?

B. Dost thou mock me or play with me, leading me with thy arguments into an inextricable labyrinth, and enclosing me in a wonderful circle of Divine Simplicity? For thou didst first begin with happiness, and didst say that it was the sovereign good, and that it resided in God; then, that God was that Good and the

2989  
perfection of happiness; and, hence, thou didst infer that nobody could be happy unless he became likewise a God. Again, thou saidst that the very form of good was the substance whereof God and happiness were composed, and that it was the object and desire of all things in nature. Thou didst prove that God rules the world by his goodness, and that all things willingly obeyed him; and that evil has no existence. These truths you established by forcible and natural arguments, and by no strained and far-fetched reasons.

2989  
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2973 is (1)—be  
man—omitted  
is (2)—nis  
2974 defendiþ—dowteth  
2975 þere—ther  
2976 do—C. omits  
soþe—soth  
done—don  
2978, 2979 done—don  
2980 wouen—MS. wonnen, C.

wouen  
2981 house—hows  
2983 þere (both)—ther  
2987 atte—at  
2988 set—MS. sette, C. set  
2989 ful[le]—fulle  
whiche—which  
ȝaf[e]—yaue  
ȝifte—yift  
seyne—seyn

2992, 2994 goode—good  
2993 oone—oon  
2994 al—alle  
2996 [the]—from C.  
2998 ybeyen—obeyen  
2999 no (2)—none  
3000 ytake—1-taken  
3001 homelyche—hoornlich  
3002 eueriche—euerich  
[of]—from C.

P. I have not deduced you, for by the Divine aid we have accomplished our chief task. I have proved to you that it is an essential property of the Divine nature not to go out of itself, nor to receive into itself anything extraneous. Parmenides says of the Deity that *God is like a well-rounded sphere.*

3012

[\* fol. 24.]

He causes the moving globe to revolve, but is himself immovable. If I have chosen my arguments from the subjects within range of our discussion, do not let that surprise you, for, as Plato has taught us, there ought to be an alliance between the words and the subject of discourse.

þe. but I haue shewed to þe þinge þat is grettest ouer alle þinges by þe 3ifte of god þat we some tyme prayden ¶ For þis is þe forme of [the] deuyne substaunce. þat is swiche þat it ne slydeþ nat in to outerest foreine þinges. ne ne rec[e]yueþ no strange þinges in hym. but ryzt as parmaynws seide in grek of þilke deuyne substaunce. he seide þus þat þilke deuyne substaunce torneþ þe worlde and þilke cercle moeueable of þinges while þilke dyuyne substaunce kepþ it self wiþ outen moeuyng. þat \* is to seyne þat it ne moeuiþ neuere mo. and zitte it moeueþ alle oþer þinges. but na-þeles yif I [haue] stered resouns þat ne ben nat taken fro wiþ oute þe compas of þe þinge of whiche we treten. but resouns þat ben bystowed wiþ inne þat compas þere nis nat whi þat þou sholde[st] merueylen. sen þou hast lerned by þe sentence of plato þat nedes þe wordes moten ben cosyne to þo þinges of whiche þei speken. 3020

## FELIX QUI POTERIT. ET CETERA.

[The .12. Metur.]

Happy is he that hath seen the lucid spring of truth! Happy the man that hath freed himself from terrestrial chains! The Thracian poet, consumed with grief for the loss of his wife, sought relief from music. His mournful songs drew the woods along; the rolling rivers ceased to flow; the savage beasts became heedless of their prey; the timid hare was not aghast at the hound. But the

Blisful is þat man þat may seen þe clere welle of good. Blisful is he þat may vnbynde hym fro þe bonde of heuy erþe. ¶ þe poete of trace [orpheus] þat somtyme hadde ryzt greet sorowe for þe deep of hys wijf. aftir þat he hadde makid by hys wepely songes þe wodes meueable to rennen. and hadde ymakid þe ryueres to stonden stille. and makid þe hertys and hyndes to ioignen dredles hir sides to cruel lyouns to herkene his songe. and had[de] makid þat þe hare was nat agast of þe hounde whiche þat was plesed by hys songe. so þat whane þe most[e] ardaunt loue of hys wijf brende þe

3004 þe þinge—the the thing

3005 3ifte—yift  
some tyme prayden —  
whilom preyeden

3006 [the]—from C.

3007 swiche—swich

3009 parmaynws -- a par-  
manides

3011 worlde—world

3012 while—whil

wiþ outen—with owte

3013 seyne—seyn

3014 zitte—vit

oþer—oother

3015 [haue]—from C.

3016 whiche—which

3017 wiþ inne—with in

3020 cosyne—MS.conceyued,  
C. cosyne

þo—þe

whiche—which

3022 vnbynde—vnbyndyn

3022 bonde—bondes

3023 [orpheus]—from C.

somtyme—whilom

3024 sorowe—sorwe

3028 dredles—dredles

to herkene—forto herkuen

3029 had[de]—hadde

3030 þat (2)—omitted

3031 most[e]—moste



entrailes of his brest. ne þe songes þat hadde ouer comen alle þinges ne myzten nat assuage hir lord orpheus. ¶ He pleynd[e] hym of þe godes þat weren cruel to hym. he wente hym to þe houses of helle and þere he tempred[e] hys blaundissyng songes by re-sounyng of hys strenges. ¶ And spak and song in wepyng alle þat euer he hadde reseuyed and laued oute of þe noble welles of hys modir calliope. þe goddesse. and he song wijþ as mychel as he myzt[e] of wepyng. and wijþ as myche as loue þat doubled[e] his sorwe myzt[e] zeuen hym and teche hym in his seke herte. ¶ And he commoeuede þe helle and requered[e] and souzte by swete preiere þe lordes of soules in helle of relesyng. þat is to seyne to zelden hym hys wif. ¶ Cerberus þe porter of helle wijþ his þre heuedes was cauzt and al abaist for þe new[e] songe. and þe þre goddeses furijs and vengerisse of felonies þat tourmenten and agasten þe soules by anye wexen sorweful and sory and wepen teres for pitee. þan was nat þe heued of Ixione ytourmented by þe ouerþrowing whele. ¶ And tantalus þat was destroyed by þe woodnesse of longe þrust dispiseþ þe flodes to drynke. þe fowel þat hyzt volor þat etijþ þe stomak or þe giser of ticius is so fulfilled of his songe þat it nil etyn ne tyren no more. ¶ Atte þe laste þe lorde and Iuge of soules was moeued to misericordes and cried[e] we ben ouer comen quod he. yif[e] we to orpheus his wijf to bere hym compaignye he haþ welle I-bouzt hir by his faire songe and

songs that did all things tame, could not allay their master's ardent love. He bewailed the cruelty of the gods above, and descended to Pluto's realm.

3036

There he struck his tuneful strings and sang, exhausting all the harmonious art imparted to him by his mother Calliope. In songs dictated both by grief and love, he implored the infernal powers to give him back his Eurydice.

3044

Cerberus, Hell's three-headed porter, stood amazed; the Furies, tormentors of guilty souls, did weep;

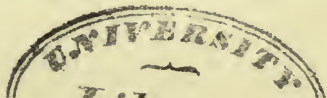
3049

Ixion, tormented by the revolving wheel, found rest; Tantalus, suffering from a long and raging thirst, despised the stream; and the greedy vulture did cease to eat and tear the growing liver of Tityus. At length Pluto himself relented, crying out, 'We are overcome! Let us give him back his wife, he hath well won her by his song.'

3032 hadde—hadden  
3033 assuage—asswagen  
lorde—lord  
3034 pleynd[e]—pleynede  
godes—heuene goodes  
3035 wente—MS. wenten, C.  
wente  
3036 tempred[e] hys—temprede hise  
3037 of hys—C. omits  
spak—MS. spakke, C. spak  
song—MS. songe, C. soonge  
3038 alle—al  
3039 oute—owt  
goddesse—goddess  
3040 song—MS. songe, C.

soonge  
mychel—mochel  
3041 myche—mochel  
doubled[e]—dowblede  
3042 myzt[e]—myhte  
zeuen—yeue  
teche—thechen  
in—herte—omitted  
3043 commoeuede—MS. com-  
aunded, C. commoeuede  
3044 souzte—by-sowhte  
3045 zelden—yilden  
3046 his—hise  
3047 cauzt—MS. cauzte, C.  
cawht  
new[e] songe—newe song

3049 anye — sorweful —  
anoy woxen soruful  
3050 þan—tho ne  
3051 whele—wheel  
3053 þrust—thurst  
hyzt—hihte  
3054 fulfilled—fulfyld  
3055 songe—song  
3056 Atte—At  
lorde—lord  
3057 cried[e]—cryde  
3058 yif[e]—yiue  
3059 haþ—MS. haþe  
welle—wel  
faire—C. omits  
songe—song



But we will lay this injunction upon him. Till he escape the infernal bounds, he shall not cast a backward look.<sup>3</sup> But, who shall give a lover any law? Love is a greater law than may be given to any earthly man. Alas! having left the realms of night, Orpheus cast a look behind and lost his too-much-loved Euridice. This fable belongs to all you, whose minds would view the Sovereign Good.

his ditee. but we wil putten a lawe in þis. *and* couen-  
aunt in þe 3ifte. þat is to seyne. þat til he be out of  
helle yif he loke byhynden hym [þat] hys wijf shal  
comen azeine to vs ¶ but what is he þat may zeue a  
lawe to loueres. loue is a gretter lawe *and* a strengere to  
hym self þan any lawe þat men may zeuen. ¶ Allas  
whan Orpheus *and* his wijf were al most at þe termes of  
þe nyzt. þat is to seyne at þe last[e] boundes of helle.  
Orpheus loked[e] abakwarde on Erudice his wijf *and*  
lost[e] hir *and* was deed. ¶ þis fable apperteineþ to  
3ow alle who so euer desireþ or sekiþ to lede his þouzte

3071

For he who fixes his thoughts upon earthly things and low, must lose the noble and heaven-imparted Good.

in to þe souereyne day. þat is to seyne to clerenes[se]  
of souereyne goode. ¶ For who so þat euere be so ouer  
comen þat he fycche hys eyen in to þe put[te] of helle.  
þat is to seyne who so setteþ his þouztes in erþely  
þinges. al þat euer he haþ drawn of þe noble good

3076

celestial he lesiþ it whan he lokeþ þe helles. þat is to  
seyne to lowe þinges of þe erþe.

## EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIVS.

[\* fol. 24 b.]

## \* INCIPIIT LIBER QUARTUS.

## HEC CUM PHILOSOPHIA DIGNITATE VULTVS.

[The 1<sup>ma</sup> prose.]

When P. with grace and dignity had poured forth her songs, I, not quite quit of my load of grief, interrupted her as she was continuing her discourse.

3082

Whanne philosophie hadde songen softly *and* delita-  
bly þe forseide þinges keypyng þe dignitee of hir  
choere in þe wey3te of hir wordes. I þan þat ne hadde  
nat al outerly forzetten þe wepyng *and* mournyng  
þat was set in myne herte for-brek þe entencioun of hir  
þat entended[e] 3itte to seyne oþer þinges. ¶ Se quod  
I. þou þat art gideresse of verray lyzte þe þinges þat þou

All your discourses, O my conductress to the

3060 wil putten—wol putte  
3062 byhynden—by-hynde  
[þat]—from C.  
3063 to—vn-to  
3064 gretter—gret  
3066 were al most—weren  
almest  
3067 last[e]—laste  
3068 loked[e] abakwarde—

lookede abakward  
3069 lost[e]—loste  
3070 þouzte—thowht  
3071 clerenes[se]—clernesse  
3072 souereyne goode—soue-  
reyn god  
3073 put[te]—putte  
3074 setteþ—sette  
3075 haþ—MS. haþe

3078 softly—softely  
3080 choere in—cheere *and*  
3082 set—MS. sette, C. set  
myne—Myn  
for-brek—MS. for-breke, C.  
Forbrak  
3083 entended[e]—entendede  
3084 lyzte—lyht

hast seid [me] hider to ben to me so clere *and* so shewyng by þe deuyne loking of hem *and* by þi resouns þat þei ne mowe nat ben ouercomen. ¶ And þilke þingus þat þou toldest me. al be it so þat I hadde som tyme fo[r]zetten hem for [the] sorwe of þe wronge þat hap ben don to me. 3it nabeles þei ne were nat alouterly vnknewen to me. but þis same is namly a gret cause of my sorwe. þat so as þe gouernoure of þinges is goode. yif þat yuelys mowen ben by any weyes. or ellys yif þat yuelys passen wiþ outen punyssheinge. þe whiche þinge oonly how worþi it is to ben wondred vpon. þou considerest it weel þi self certeynly. but 3itte to þis þing þere is an oþer þing y-ioigned more to ben ywondred vpon. ¶ For felonie is emperisse *and* flowreþ ful of rychesse. and vertues nis nat al oonly wiþ outen medes. but it is cast vndir *and* fortroden vndir þe feet of felonous folk. *and* it abieþ þe tourmentes in sted of wicked felouns ¶ Of al[le] whiche þing þer nis no wyzt þat [may] merueyllen ynou3 ne compleyne þat swiche þinges ben don in þe regne of god þat alle þinges woot. and alle þinges may *and* ne wool nat but only goode þinges. ¶ þan seide she þus. certys *quod* she þat were a grete meruayle *and* an enbaissynge wiþouten ende. *and* wel more horrible þan alle monstres yif it were as þou wenest. þat is to sein. þat in þe ryzt ordeyne house of so mochel a fader *and* an ordenour of meyne. þat þe vesseles þat ben foule *and* vyle sholde ben honoured *and* heried. and þe precious uesteles sholde ben defouled *and* vyle. but it nis nat so. For yif þe þinges

true light! have been very clear and unanswerable, both by the divine testimony which they carry along with them, and by thy irrefragable arguments. Through the oppression of grief I had forgotten these truths, but was not wholly ignorant of them. The principal cause of my trouble is this—that, whilst the absolute Ruler of all things is goodness itself, evil exists and is allowed to pass unpunished. This, to say the least, is astonishing.

3097

Moreover, while *vice* flourishes *virtue* is not only unrewarded, but trampled under foot by base and profligate men, and suffers the punishment due to impiety. Here is cause for wonderment, since such things are possible under the government of an omniscient and omnipotent God, who wills nothing but what is the best.

3107

P. It were indeed, not only marvellous, but also horribly monstrous, if, in the well-regulated family of so great a master, the worthless vessels should be honoured and the precious ones be despised:—but it is not so. For if

3035 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seid  
[me]—from C.  
3086 þi—the  
3087 mowe—mowen  
3088 som tyme—whilom  
3089 [the]—from C.  
wronge—wrong  
hap—MS. hape  
3090 don—MS. done, C. don  
were—weeren  
3091 namly—namely  
3092 goode—good  
3094 wiþ outen—with owte

3095 þinge—thing  
3097 pere—ther  
ben ywondred—be wondred  
dryd  
3098 flowreþ—MS. folweþ,  
C. flowrith  
3099 rychesse—Rychesses  
vertues—vertu  
wiþ outen—with owte  
3101 in sted—in stide  
3102 wicked—wikkede  
al[le]—alle  
þing—thinges

3103 [may]—from C.  
3104 don—MS. done, C. doon  
3105 wool—wole  
goode—good  
3107 grete—gret  
enbaissynge—enbasshinge  
3108 alle—al  
3109 ordeyne house—ordence  
hows  
3111, 3113 vyle—vyl  
3112 heried—he heried  
sholde—sholden  
3113 þe—tho



the conclusions we have come to, be sound and irrefragable, we must confess that under God's rule the good are always powerful and mighty, and the wicked weak and contemptible; that vice never passes unpunished, nor virtue goes unrewarded; that happiness attends good men, and misfortune falls to the lot of the wicked. These and many other truths of like nature shall be proved to thee, and shall put an end to thy complaints, and strengthen thee with firmness and solidity. Having shown you a picture of true felicity, and wherein it resides, I shall now trace out the way which will lead you to your home. I will give your soul wings to soar aloft, so that all tribulation being removed, you may, under my guiding, by my road, and with my vehicle, return whole and sound into your own country.

[The fyrste metur.]  
I have nimble wings that enable the mind to rise from earth to heaven, to leave the clouds behind, to pass the region of perpetual flame, and to reach the starry mansion, journeying either by Phœbus'

3139

pat I haue concluded a litel here byforne ben kept hool and vnaced. þou shalt wel knowe by þe auctorite of god. of þe whos regne I speke þat certys þe good[e] folk ben alwey myzty. and shrewes ben alwey yuel and feble. ne þe vices ben neuere mo wiþ outen peyne: ne þe vertues ne ben nat wiþ outen mede. and þat blisfulnesses comen alwey to goode folke. and infortune comeþ alwey to wicked folke. ¶ And þou shalt wel knowe many[e] þinges of þis kynde þat sholle cessen þi pleyntes. and stedfast þe wiþ stedfast saddenese. ¶ And for þou hast seyn þe forme of þe verray blisfulnesse by me þat [haue] somtyme I-shewed it þe. And þou hast knowen in whom blysfulnesse is set. alle þinges I treted þat I trowe ben nessessarie to put[te] furþe ¶ I shal shewe þe. þe weye þat shal brynge þe azeyne vnto þi house and I shal ficche feþeres in þi þouzt by whiche it may arysen in heyzte. so þat al tribulacioun don away. þou by my gidyng & by my pape and by my sledes shalt mowen retourne hool and sounde in to þi contre. 3132

## SUNT ETENIM PENNE. ET CETERA.

I Haue for soþe swifte feþeres þat surmounten þe heyzt of þe heuene whan þe swifte þouzt hap cloþed it self. in þo feþeres it dispiseþ þe hat[e]ful erþes. and surmounteþ þe heyzenesse of þe greet[e] eyir. and it seiþ þe cloudes by-hynde hir bak and passeþ þe heyzt of þe regioun of þe fire þat eschaufiþ by þe swifte moeuyng of þe firmament. til þat she a-reisþ hir in til þe houses þat

3114 here byforne—her by-  
forn  
kept—MS. kepte, C. kept  
3116 good[e]—goode  
3117 alwey (2)—feble — al-  
wey owt cast and feble  
3118, 3119 wiþ outen — with  
owte  
3119 vertues—vertuus  
3122 many[e]—manye  
sholle cessen — shollen  
cesen  
3123 stedfast — stedfast—  
strengthyn the with  
stidfast

3124 seyn — MS. seyne, C.  
seyn  
3125 [haue]—from C.  
somytyme—whilom  
3126 set—MS. sette, C. I-set  
3127 put[te] furþe — putten  
forth  
3128 weye—wey  
brynge—bryngen  
þi house—thin hows  
3129 ficche—fycchen  
3130 arysen—areysen  
don—MS. done, C. ydoñ  
3131 pape—paath  
shalt mowen—shal mowe

3132 sounde—sownd  
3133 heyzt of þe heuene —  
heyhte of heuene  
3134 hap—MS. hape  
3136 heyzenesse — eyir —  
Roundnesse of the grete  
ayr  
seiþ—seth  
3137 hir—his  
3138 fire—Fyr  
eschaufiþ—MS. eschaufiþe  
3139 she—he  
hir—hym

beren þe sterres. *and* ioygneþ hir weyes wiþ þe sonne  
phebus. *and* felawshipeþ þe weye of þe olde colde  
saturnus. *and* she ymaked a knyzt of þe clere sterre.  
þat is to seyne þat þe soule is maked goddys knyzt by  
þe sekyng of treuþe to comen to þe verray knowlege of  
god. *and* þilke soule renne[þ] by þe cerce \*of þe sterres  
in alle þe places þere as þe shynnyng nyzt is depeynted.  
þat is to seyne þe nyzt þat is cloudeles. for on nyztes þat  
ben cloudeles it semeþ as þe heuene were peynted wiþ  
dyuerse ymages of sterres. *and* whan þe soule haþ gon  
ynou3 she shal forleten þe last[e] poynt of þe heuene.  
*and* she shal pressen *and* wenden on þe bak of þe swifte  
firmament. *and* she shal ben maked perfit of þe drede-  
fulle clerenesse of god. ¶ þere haldeþ þe lorde of kynges  
þe ceptre of his myzt *and* attempereþ þe gouernementes  
of þis worlde. *and* þe shynnyng iuge of þinges stable in  
hym self gouerneþ þe swifte carte. þat is to seyne þe  
circular moeuynge of [the] sonne. *and* yif þi weye ledeþ  
þe a3eyne so þat þou be brouzt þider. þan wilt þou seye  
now þat þat is þe contre þat þou requeredest of whiche þou  
ne haddest no mynde. but now it remembreþ me wel  
here was I born. here wil I fastne my degree. here wil  
I dwelle. but yif þe lyke þan to loken on þe derkenesse  
of þe erþe þat þou hast for-leten. þan shalt þou seen þat  
þise felonous tyrauntes þat þe wrecched[e] poeple dredeþ  
now shule ben exiled from þilke faire contre.

radiant path, or  
accompanying  
cold and aged  
Saturn, or riding,  
3142

as a soldier, with  
Mars. [Chaucer's  
Gloss.] Through  
every sphere she  
(the mind) runs

[\* fol. 25.]  
where night is  
most cloudless and  
where the sky is  
decked with stars,  
until she reaches  
the heaven's  
utmost sphere—  
then pressing on  
she shall be pre-  
pared to see the  
true Source of  
Light, where the  
great King of  
kings bears his  
mighty sceptre,  
and holds the  
reins of the  
universe. Here  
the great Judge,  
standing in  
shining robes,  
firmly guides his  
winged chariot,  
and rules the  
tumultuous affairs  
of the world.

If you at length  
shall arrive at  
this abode, you  
will say this is  
my country—here  
I was born—and  
here will I abide.

3161

And should you  
deign to look on  
the gloomy earth,  
you'll see those  
tyrants, the fear  
of wretched folk,  
banished from  
those fair realms.

3140 *hir*—his  
3141 *weye*—wey  
    *þe*—*saturnus*—MS. sa-  
        turnus þe olde colde  
3142 *saturnus*—*saturnis*  
    *she*—he  
3143 *soule*—thowght  
3144 *treuþe*—trowthe  
    *knowlege*—knoche  
3145 *soule*—thoght  
3146 *depeynted*—painted  
3149-50 *and whan*—*she snal*

—*and* whanne he hath  
I-doon there I-nowh he  
shal  
3149 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
3150 *þe last[e]*—*heuene*—  
    the laste heuene  
3151-2 *she*—he  
3152-3 *of þe*—*of god*—of the  
    worshipful lyht of god .  
3153 *þere haldeþ*—ther halt  
3155 *þis worlde*—the world  
3156 *carte*—cart or wayn

3157 [*the*]—from C.  
3159 *whiche*—which  
3161 *here* (1, 2, 3)—her  
    *born*—MS. borne, C. born  
    *wil* (1)—wol  
    *wil* (2)—wole  
3162 *lyke*—liketh  
    *derkenesse*—dyrknesses  
3164 *wrecched[e]*—wrecch-  
    ede  
3165 *shule*—shollen  
    *from*—fro

## TUNC EGO PAPE INQUAM, ET CETERA.

[The 2<sup>o</sup> prose.]

B. Ah! thou promisest me great things indeed!—but without delay, satisfy the expectations you have raised.

P. You must first be convinced that the good are always strong and powerful and the wicked destitute of strength. These assertions do

3173

mutually demonstrate each other. For since good and evil are contrary, if good be powerful evil must be impotent. And if the frailty of evil is known, the strength and stability of good must also be known to you. But to convince you I shall proceed to prove it from both these principles, establishing these truths, by arguments drawn first from one of these topics and then from the other. Two things are necessary to every action—the Will and the Power; if either be wanting, nothing can be effected. A man can do nothing without the concurrence of his will, and if power faileth the will is of no effect.

Hence, if you see a person desirous

3191

of getting what he cannot procure, you are sure he lacks power to obtain it. And if you see another do what he had a mind to do, can you doubt

**P**Anne seide I þus. [owh] I wondre me þat þou by-hetest me so grete þinges. ne I ne doute nat þat þou ne mayst wel performe þat þou by-hetest. but I preie þe only þis. þat þou ne tarie nat to telle me þilke þinges þat þou hast meoued. first quod she þou most nedes knowen. þat good[e] folk ben al wey strong[e] and myzty. and þe shrewes ben feble and desert and naked of alle strengþes. and of þise þinges certys eueryche of hem is declared and shewed by oþer. ¶ For so as good and yuel ben two contraries. yif so be þat goode be stedfast. þan sheweth þe fieblesse of yuel al openly. and yif þou knowe clerely þe freelnesse of yuel. þe stedfastnesse of goode is knowen. but for as moche as þe fey of my sentence shal be þe more ferme and haboundaunt. I wil goon by þat oon wey and by þat oþer and I wil conferme þe þinges þat ben purposed now on þis side and now on þat syde. ¶ Two þinges þer ben in whiche þe effect of alle þe dedes of man kynde standiþ. þat is to seyn. wil and power. and yif þat oon of þise two fayleþ þere nis no þing þat may be don. for yif þat wil lakkeþ þere nys no wyzt þat vndirtakeþ to done þat he wol not don. and yif power fayleþ þe wille nis but in ydel and stant for nauzt. and þer of comeþ it þat yif þou se a wyzt þat wolde geten þat he may nat geten. þou mayst nat douten þat power ne fayleþ hym to hauen þat he wolde. ¶ þis is open and clere quod I. ne it may nat ben denyed in no manere. and yif þou se a wyzt quod she. þat haþ don þat he wolde don þou nilt nat douten þat he ne haþ had power to done it. no quod. I. and in þat. þat euery wyzt may. in þat þat men may holden

3166 [owh]—from C.

3171 good[e]—goode

strong[e]—stronge

3172 desert—dishert

3173 eueryche—euerich

3175 goode—good

3176 stedfast—stidefast

3177 freelnesse—frelenesse

stedfastnesse — stidefast-

nesse

3178 goode—good

3180 oon—oo

wil (2)—wole

3185-6 þere—ther

3185 don—MS. done, C. don

3186 done—don

3187 wille—wil

3188 comeþ—comht

3189 mayst—MS. mayste,  
C. mayst

3191 clere—cler

3192 denyed—denoyed

3193-4 haþ—MS. haþe

3193 don (both)—MS. done,

C. doon

3194 had—MS. hadde, C. had

done—doon



hym myzty. as who seip in as moche as a man is myzty to done a ping. in so moche men halden hym myzty. and in þat þat he ne may. in þat men demen hym to ben feble. I confesse it wel quod I. Remembriþ þe quod she þat I. haue gadred *and* shewed by forseide resouns þat al þe entencioun of þe wil of mankynde whiche þat is lad by diuerse studies hastiþ to comen to blisfulnesse. ¶ It remembreþ me wel quod I þat it hath ben shewed. *and* recorderþ þe nat þan quod she. þat blisfulnesse is pilke same goode þat men requeren. so þat whan þat blisfulnesse is required \*of alle. þat goode [also] is required *and* desired of al. It recorderþ me wel quod I. for haue it gretly alwey ficche[d] in my memorie. alle folk þan quod she goode *and* eke badde enforcen hem wiþ oute difference of entencioun to comen to goode. þat is a uerray consequence quod I. and certeyne is quod she þat by þe getyng of goode ben men ymaked goode. þis is certeyne quod. I. ¶ þan geten goode men þat þei desiren. so semeþ it quod I. but wicked[e] folk quod she yif þei geten þe goode þat þei desiren þei [ne] mowen nat ben wicked. so is it quod .I. ¶ þan so as þat oon *and* þat oþer [quod she] desiren good. *and* þe goode folk geten good *and* nat þe wicked folk ¶ þan nis it no doute þat þe goode folk ne ben myzty *and* þe wicked folk ben feble. ¶ who so þat euer quod I douteþ of þis. he ne may nat considre þe nature of pinges. ne þe consequence of resoun. and ouer þis quod she. ¶ yif þat þer ben two pinges þat han o same purpos by kynde. *and* þat one of hem pursueþ *and* per-formeþ pilke same ping by naturel office. *and* þat oþer ne may nat done pilk naturel office. but folweþ by oþer manere þan is couenable to nature ¶ Hym þat

that he had the power to do it?  
B. No, surely.  
P. A man, then, is esteemed powerful in respect of what he is able to do, and weak in relation to what he is unable to perform.  
B. That is true.  
P. Do you remember that I proved that the will of man, following different pursuits, seeks happiness only? Do you recollect too, that it has been shown that happiness is  
[\* fol. 25 b.] the supreme good of men—and all desire this good, since all seek happiness?  
All men, then, good and bad, seek to acquire good? And it is certain that when men obtain good they become good?  
3212

B. It is most certain.  
P. Do good men, then, get what they desire?  
B. It seems so.  
P. If evil men obtain the good, they can be no longer evil?  
B. It is so.  
P. Since then both parties pursue the good, which only the virtuous obtain, we must believe that good men are powerful, and that the wicked are weak and feeble?  
B. None can doubt this, save such as either consider not rightly the nature of things, or are incapable of comprehending the force of any reasoning.  
P. If two beings have the same end in view—

3196 *as moche*—so moche  
3197 *done*—doon  
*moche*—mochel  
*halden*—halt  
3201 *whiche*—which  
3202 *lad*—MS. ladde, C. lad  
3203 *it hath ben*—MS. I herde

þe, C. it hath ben  
3205-6 *goode*—good  
3206 [*also*]—from C.  
3207 *al*—alle  
It—I—it nerecordeth me  
nat quod I  
3210-12(1)-15 *goode*—good

3214 *wicked[e]*—wikkede  
3215 [*ne*]—from C.  
3216 *mowen*—mowe  
3217 [*quod she*]—from C.  
3218 *wicked*—wikke (? wikke)  
3220 *wicked*—wikkede  
3226 *pilk*—thilke

and one of them accomplishes his purpose by the use of natural means, while the other not using legitimate means does not attain his end—which of these two is the most powerful?

*B.* Illustrate your meaning more clearly.

*P.* The motion of walking is natural to man? And this motion is the natural office of the feet? Do you grant this?

*B.* I do.  
*P.* If, then, he who is able to use his feet walks, whilst another lacking this power creeps on his hands—surely he that is able to move naturally upon his feet is more powerful than he who

3243 cannot.

*P.* The good and bad seek the supreme good: the good by the natural means of virtue—the wicked by gratifying divers desires of earthly things (which is not the natural way of obtaining it). Do you think otherwise?

*B.* The consequence is plain, and that follows from what has been granted—that the good are powerful, while the wicked are feeble.

*P.* You rightly anticipate me; for it is a good sign, as physicians well know, when Nature exerts herself and resists the malady. But, as you are so quick of appre-

acomplisib hys purpos kyndely. and 3it he ne acomplisib nat hys owen purpos. wheþer of þise two demest þou for more myzty. ¶ yif þat I coniecte quod .I. þat þou wilt seye algates. 3it I desire to herkene it more pleynelly of þe. þou nilt nat þan denye quod she þat þe moeuementz of goynge nis in men by kynde. no for soþe quod I. ne þou ne doutest nat quod she þat þilke naturel office of goynge ne be þe office of feet. I ne doute it nat quod .I. þan quod she yif þat a wyzt be myzty to moeue and goþ vpon hys feet. and anoþer to whom þilke naturel office of feet lakkeþ. enforceþ hym to gone crepyngē vpon hys handes. ¶ whiche of þise two auzte to ben holden more myzty by ryzt. knyrt furþe þe remenaunt quod I. ¶ For no wyzt ne douteþ þat he þat may gone by naturel office of feet. ne be more myzty þan he þat ne may nat ¶ but þe souereyne good quod she þat is euenlyche purposed to þe good folk and to badde. þe good folke seken it by naturel office of uertues. and þe shrewes enforceen hem to geten it by dyuerse couetise of erþely þinges. whiche þat nis no naturel office to geten þilke same souereyne goode. trowest þou þat it be any oþer wyse. nay quod .I. for þe consequence is open and shewyngē of þinges þat I haue graunted. ¶ þat nedes goode folk moten ben myzty. and shrewes feble and vnmyzty. ¶ þou rennest aryzt byfore me quod she. and þis is þe iugement þat is to seyn. ¶ I iuge of þe ryzt as þise leches ben wont forto hopen of seke folk whan þei aperceyuen þat nature is redressed and wiþstondeþ to þe maladie. ¶ But for I see þe now al redy to þe vndirstandyngē I shal shewe þe more þilke and continuel resounz. ¶ For loke now

3229 *owen*—owne

3231 *wilt*—wolt  
*herkene*—herkne

3232 *pleynely*—pleynly

*denye*—denoye

3233 *moeuementz* — Moeuement

3237 *goþ*—MS. goþe

*hys*—hise

3238 *gone*—goon

3239 *hys*—hise

*whiche*—which

3240 *more*—the Moore

*furþe*—forth

3242 *gone*—gon

3245 *good*—goode

3246 *uertues*—vertuus

3247 *whiche*—which

3248 *goode*—good

3253 *byfore*—by-form

3254 *forto*—to

3255 *seke*—sike

how gretly shewiþ þe feblesse *and* infirmite of wicked folke. þat ne mowen nat come to þat hire naturel entencioun ledeþ hem. *and* zitte almost þilke naturel entencioun constreineþ hem. ¶ *and* what were to deme þan of shrewes. yif þilke naturel helpe hadde for-leten hem. ¶ þe whiche naturel helpe of entencioun goþ alwey byforne hem. *and* is so grete þat vnneþ it may be ouercomen. ¶ Considre þan how gret defaute of power *and* how gret feblesse þere is in grete felonous folk as who seiþ þe gretter þinges þat ben coueited *and* þe desire nat accomplissed of þe lasse myzt is he þat coueiteþ it *and* may nat acomplisse. ¶ *And* forþi philosophie seiþ þus by souereyne good. ¶ Sherewes ne requere nat lyzt[e] medes ne veyne gaines whiche þei ne may nat folwen ne holden. but þei faylen of þilke some of þe heyzte of þinges þat is to seyne souereyne good. ne þise wrecches ne comen nat to þe effect of souereyne good. \*þe whiche þei enforcen hem oonly to geten by nyztes *and* by dayes. ¶ In þe getyn[g] of whiche goode þe strengþe of good folk. is ful wel ysen. For ryzt so as þou myztest demen hym myzty of goynge þat goþ on hys feet til he myzt[e] come to þilke place fro þe whiche place þere ne lay no wey forþer to be gon. Ryzt so most þou nedes demen hym for ryzt myzty þat getiþ *and* atteiniþ to þe ende of alle þinges þat ben to desire. by-zonde þe whiche ende þat þer nis no þing to desire. ¶ Of whiche power of good folk men may conclude þat wicked men semen to ben bareyne *and* naked of alle strengþe. For whi forleten þei vertues *and* folwen vices. nis it nat for þat þei ne knowen nat þe goodes.

hension, I shall continue this mode of reasoning. The weakness of the wicked is conspicuous—they cannot attain the end to which their natural disposition prompts and almost compels them; what would become of them without this natural prompting, so powerful and irresistible? Consider how great is the impotence of the wicked. (The greater the things desired, but unaccomplished, the less is the power of him that desires, and is unable to attain his end.) The wicked seek after no trivial things—which they fail to obtain; but they aspire in

3275  
vain to the sovereign good, which they endeavour  
[\* fol. 26.]  
day and night to obtain. The good attain the end of their desires, and therein their power is manifested. For as you deem him a good walker that goes to the end of his journey, so you must esteem him powerful that attains his desires, beyond which there is nothing to desire. Wicked men, then, are destitute of those powers which the good so amply possess. Wherefore do they leave virtue, and follow vice? Is it because they are ignorant of good?

3259 *wicked*—wikkede  
3260 *come*—comyn  
3261 *þilke*—þilke  
3262 *deme*—demen  
3263-4 *helpe*—help  
3264 *whiche*—which  
*goþ*—MS. goþe  
3265 *grete*—gret  
*vnneþ*—vnnethe  
*be ouercomen*—ben ouercome  
3267 *þere*—ther

*grete*—wikkede  
3268 *þinges*—thing  
*ben*—is  
3271 *Sherewes ne requere*—  
ne shrewes ne requeren  
3272 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte  
*veyne*—veyn  
*nat*—omitted  
3276 *whiche*—which  
3277 *getyn[g]*—getinge  
*whiche goode*—which good  
3278 *ysen*—MS. and C. ysene

3279 *goþ*—MS. goþe  
3280 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
3281 *þere*—ther  
*lay*—laye  
*forþer*—forthere  
*be*—ben  
3283 *desire*—desired  
3284 *þat*—omitted  
3285 *whiche*—the which  
*þat*—þat the  
3286 *ben*—be



What is more weak and base than the blindness of ignorance? Or do they know the way they ought to follow, but are led astray by lust and covetousness? And so, indeed, weak-minded men are overpowered by intemperance, for they cannot resist vicious temptations. Do they willingly desert Good and turn to Evil? If they do so, they not only cease to be powerful, but even cease to exist. For those who neglect the common end of all beings, cease to exist. You may marvel that I assert that the wicked, the majority of the human race, have no existence—

3304 but it is, however, most true. That the wicked are bad I do not deny—but I do not admit that they have any real existence. You may call a corpse a dead man, but you cannot with propriety call it a man. So the vicious are profligate men, but I cannot confess they absolutely exist. That thing exists that preserves its rank, nature, and constitution, but when it loses these essentials it ceases to be. But, you may say that the wicked have a power to act, nor do I deny it; but their power is an effect of weakness. They can do evil, but this they could

¶ But what þing is more feble *and* more caitif þan is þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce. or ellys þei knowen ful wel whiche þinges þat þei auzten to folwen ¶ but lecherye *and* couetise ouerþroweþ hem mysturned. ¶ *and* certis so doþ distemperaunce to feble men. þat ne mowen nat wrastle azeins þe vices ¶ Ne knowen þei nat þan wel þat þei foreleten þe good wilfully. *and* turnen hem vilfully to vices. ¶ *And* in þis wise þei ne forleten nat oonly to ben myzty. but þei forleten al outerly in any wise forto ben ¶ For þei þat forleten þe comune fyn of alle þinges þat ben. þei for-leten also þerwiþ al forto ben. *and* perauenture it sholde semen to som folk þat þis were a merueile to seyne þat shrewes whiche þat contienen þe more *partie* of men ne ben nat. ne han no beynge. ¶ but napeles it is so. *and* þus stant þis þing for þei þat ben shrewes I denye nat þat þei ben shrewes. but I denye *and* sey[e] symplely *and* pleynly þat þei [ne] ben nat. ne han no beynge. for ryzt as þou myztest seyne of þe careyne of a man þat it were a ded man. ¶ but þou ne myztest nat symplely callen it a man. ¶ So graunt[e] I wel for soþe þat vicious folk ben wicked. but I ne may nat graunten absolutely *and* symplely þat þei ben. ¶ For þilk þing þat wiþ holdeþ ordre *and* kepþ nature. þilk þing is *and* haþ beynge. but þat þing þat faileþ of þat. þat is to. seyne he þat forletþ naturel ordre he for-letþ þilk beyng þat is set in hys nature. but þou wolt sein þat shrewes mowen. ¶ Certys þat ne denye I nat. ¶ but certys hir power ne descendeþ nat of strengþe but of feblesse. for þei mowen don wickednesses. þe whiche þei ne myzten nat don yif þei myzten dwelle in þe forme *and*

3291. *auzten to folwen* —  
owhten folwe  
3293 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
3294 *wrastle*—wrastlen  
3295 *vilfully*—wilsfully  
3297 *outerly*—owtrely  
3301 *seyne*—seyen  
3304-5 *denye*—denoye

3305 *sey[e] symplely* — seye  
sympeli  
3306 [ne]—from C.  
3307 *seyne*—seyen  
3309 *graunt[e]*—graunte  
3311-12 *þilk*—þilke  
3312 *haþ*—MS. hape  
3313 *þat* (1)—what

3313 *seyne*—seyen  
3314 *þilk*—þilke  
3315 *set*—MS. sette, C. set  
3316 *denye*—denoye  
3318 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
3319 *myzten* (1)—myhte  
*dwelle*—dwellin

in þe doynge of goode folke. ¶ And þilke power shewep ful euydently þat þei ne mowen ryzt nauzt. ¶ For so as I haue gadered *and* proued a lytel her byforn þat yuel is nauzt. *and* so as shrewes mowen oonly but shrewednesse. þis conclusioun is al clere. þat shrewes ne mowen ryzt nat to han power. and for as moche as þou vndirstonde whiche is þe strengþe þat is power of shrewes. I haue diffinised a lytel here byforn þat no þing nis so myzty as souereyne good ¶ þat is soþe quod .I. [*and* thilke same souereyn good may don non yuel // Certes no quod I] ¶ Is þer any wyzt þan quod she þat wenip þat men mowen don alle þinges. No man quod .I. but yif he be out of hys witte. ¶ but certys shrewes mowen doñ yuel quod she. ¶ 3e wolde god quod I þat þei ne myzten don none. þat quod she so as he þat is myzty to done oonly but good[e] þinges may don alle þinges. and þei þat ben myzty to done yuel[e] þinges ne mowen nat alle þinges. þan is þis open þing *and* manifest þat þei þat mowen don yuel ben of lasse power. and zitte to proue þis conclusioun þere helpeþ me þis þat I haue shewed here byforne. þat al power is to be noumbred amonge þinges þat men auzten requere. *and* haue shewed þat alle þinges þat auzten ben desired ben referred to good ryzt as to a manere heyzte of hyr nature. ¶ But for to mowen don yuel *and* felonye ne may nat ben referred to good. þan nis nat yuel of þe noumbre of þinges þat auzten. \*be desired. but al power auzt[e] ben desired *and* required. ¶ þan is it open *and* cler þat þe power ne þe moeuyng of shrewes nis no powere. *and* of alle þise þinges it shewep wel þat

not do, if they retained the power of doing good. This power, then, clearly shows their impotence. For as evil is nothing, it is clear that while the wicked can only do evil they can do nothing. That you may understand the force of this power, I have proved that nothing is more powerful than the sovereign good. B. That is true. P. And that supreme good can do no evil? B. Certainly not. P. Is there any one who thinks that man can do all things? B. No sane man can think so. P. But men may do evil. B. I would to God they could not. P. Since he that can do good, can

3336 do all things, and he that has power to do evil cannot do all things, therefore the evil-doers are less powerful. Let me add too that power is one of the things to be desired, and that all such things are to be referred to the chief good (the perfection of their nature). But the power of doing evil has no relation to that Good, therefore it is not desirable; but as [\* fol. 26 b.] all power is desirable, it is clear that the ability to do evil is not power. It clearly follows from this reasoning,

3320 *goode*—good  
3324 *shrewednesse*—shrew-  
ednesses  
*clere*—cleer  
3325 *nat*—power—nawht  
ne han no power  
3326 *whiche*—which  
þat is—of this  
3327 *here*—her  
3328 *nis*—is  
3329 *soþe*—soth

3329, 3330 [*and thilke* —  
*quod I*]—from C..  
3334 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
*none þat*—non thanne  
3335 *done*—doon  
*good[e]*—goode  
3336 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
*done*—don  
3337 *yuel[e]*—yuele  
*þis*—it  
3333 *don*—MS. done, C. don

3339 *zitte*—yit  
*þere*—ther  
3340 *shewed here byforne*—  
Ishewed her by-forn  
*al*—alle  
3341 *amonge*—among  
3344 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
3346 *auzten be*—owhte ben  
3347 *al*—alle  
*auzt[e]*—owhte

that the good only are powerful while the vicious are feeble. And Plato's opinion is hereby verified that the *wise* only have the power to do what they desire; the wicked may follow the dictates of their lusts, but their great aim and desire, *i. e.* HAPPINESS, they can never attain. The wicked may gratify their desires, thinking to attain the chief good (for which they wish), but they can never possess it, for impiety and vice can never be crowned with happiness.

[The 13<sup>de</sup> Metur.]  
Whosoever might strip of their purple coverings, proud kings, who, surrounded by their guards,

3364

sit on lofty thrones, and whose stern looks wear fierce threatenings, and boiling breasts breathe fury; would see those mighty lords inwardly fettered, and tormented by lust, passion, grief, and delusive hopes.

3371

Since, then, so many tyrants bear sway over one head—that lord, oppressed by so many masters (*i. e.* vices), is weak and feeble, and his actions are not obedient to his will.

þe goode folk ben certeynly myzty. *and* þe shrewes ben douteles vnmyzty ¶ And it is clere *and* open þat þilke sentence of plato is uerray *and* soþe. þat seyb þat only wisemen may [doon] þat þei desiren. *and* shrewes mowen haunten þat hem lykeþ. but þat þei desiren þat is to seyne to comen to souereyne good þei ne han no power to acomplissen þat. ¶ For shrewes don þat hem list whan by þo þinges in whiche þei deliten þei wenen to atteyne to þilke good þat þei desiren. but þei ne geten ne atteynen nat þer to. ¶ for vices ne comen nat to blisfulnesse.

3360

## QUOS UIDES SEDERE CELSOS.

Who so þat þe couertures of her veyn apparailles myz[e] strepen of þise proude kynges þat þou seest sitten on heyze in her chayeres glyteryng in shynyng purple envyrond wip sorweful armures manasyng wip cruel mouþe. blowing by woodnesse of herte. ¶ He sholde se þan þat ilke lordes beren wip inne hir corages ful streyte cheynes for lecherye tormentiþ hem on þat oon syde wip gredy venyms *and* troublable Ire þat araiseþ in hem þe floodes of troubynges tourmentiþ vpon þat oþer side hir þouzt. or sorwe halt hem wery or ycauzt. or slidyng *and* disseyuyng hope tourmentiþ hem. And þefore syn þou seest on heed. þat is to seyne oon tyraunt bere so many[e] tyrauntis. þan ne doþ þilk tyraunt nat þat he desiriþ. syn he is cast doune wip so many[e] wicked lordes. þat is to seyn wip so many[e] vices. þat han so wicked lordshipes ouer hym.

3377

3351 *clere*—cler  
3352 *soþe*—soth  
þat *seyb*—MS. but siþe, C.  
þat *seyth*  
3353 [*doon*]  
3355 *seyne*—seyn  
3357 *whiche*—which  
3361-63 *her*—hir  
3362 *myz[e]*—myhte

3363 *heyze*—heygh  
3364 *sorweful*—sorwful  
3365 *mouþe*—Mowth  
3366 *se*—seen  
*ilke*—thilke  
3368 *on*—in  
3369 *hem*—hym  
3371 *disseyuyng*—deceuy-  
yng

3373 *seyne*—seyn  
*bere*—beeren  
3373-75-76 *many[e]*—manye  
3373 *tyrauntis*—tyranys  
3374 *doþ*—MS. doþe  
*þilk*—thilke  
3375 *doune*—down  
*wicked*—wikkede  
3376 *wicked*—wikkedly



## VIDES NE IGITUR QUANTO.

Seest þou nat þan in how gret filþe þise shrewes ben  
 S ywrapped. *and* wiþ whiche cleernesse þise good  
 folk shynen. In þis shewep it wel þat to good folk ne  
 lakkep neuer mo hir medes. ne shrewes ne lakken  
 neuer mo *tourmentis*. for of alle þinges þat ben ydon  
 þilke þing for whiche any þing is doon. it semeþ as by  
 ryzt þat þilke þing be þe mede of þat. as þus. ¶ yif a  
 man rennep in þe stadie or in þe forlonge for þe corone.  
 þan lieþ þe mede in þe corone for whiche he rennep.  
 ¶ And I haue shewed þat blisfulnesse is þilke same  
 good for whiche þat alle þingus ben don. þan is þilke  
 same good purposed to þe werkes of mankynde ryzt as  
 a comune mede. whiche mede ne may ben disseuered  
 fro good folk. for no wyzt as by ryzt fro þennes forþe  
 þat hym lakkip goodnesse ne shal ben cleped good.  
 For whiche þing folk of good[e] maneres her medes ne  
 forsaken hem neuer mo. For al be it so þat sherewes  
 waxen as wood as hem list azeynes good[e] folk. 3itte  
 neuer þe les þe corone of wise men ne shal nat fallen  
 ne faden. ¶ For foreine shrewednesse ne bynymep  
 nat fro þe corages of good[e] folk hire propre honoure.  
 but yif þat any wyzt reioiseþ hem of goodnesse þat þei  
 had[de] taken fro wiþoute. as who seiþ yif [þat] any  
 wyzt had[de] hys goodnesse of any oþer man þan of  
 hym self. certys he þat 3af hym þilke goodnesse or  
 ellys som oþer wyzt myzt[e] bynym[e] it hym. but for  
 as moche as to euery wyzt hys owen propre bounte  
 zeueþ hym hys mede. þan at arst shal he faylen of  
 mede whan he forletip to ben good. *and* at þe laste so  
 as alle medes ben requered for men wenen þat þei ben

[The iij.<sup>de</sup> prose.]

See you not  
 in how great and  
 filthy a mire the  
 wicked wallow?  
 This is a proof  
 that good folks  
 do not go unre-  
 warded, nor do  
 the evil-doers  
 escape punish-  
 ment. Every ac-  
 tion is done for a  
 certain end, and  
 that end is the re-  
 ward of the action.  
 But Happiness is  
 that good for  
 which all things  
 are done. There-  
 fore happiness is  
 the reward which  
 all the human  
 race seek as the  
 reward of their  
 actions. This  
 good is insepar-  
 able from the vir-  
 tuous, therefore  
 virtue can never  
 want its reward.  
 Evil men may  
 rage as they

3392

please against the  
 good, but the  
 crown of the wise  
 shall not fall nor  
 fade. The wicked-  
 ness of another  
 cannot deprive a  
 virtuous soul of  
 its own honour.  
 If a man pride  
 himself on the  
 possession of an  
 advantage recei-  
 ved from  
 another, he may  
 be deprived of it,  
 either by the  
 giver or by others.  
 But, as the re-  
 ward of the  
 virtuous is derived  
 from virtue, a  
 man cannot lose  
 this need unless  
 he ceases to be  
 virtuous. Lastly,  
 since a reward is  
 desired because it  
 is supposed to be  
 a good, can we be-  
 lieve that he who  
 is capable of good  
 is deprived of the  
 recompense?

3379 *whiche*—which  
 3380 *good*—goode  
 3381 *ne* (2)—omitted  
 3383 *whiche*—which  
 3385 *forlonge*—forlong  
 3386-88-90 *whiche*—which  
 3391 *forþe*—forth  
 3393 *whiche*—which

3393 *good[e]*—goode  
 3395 *wood*—woode  
       *good[e]*—goode  
 3396 *les*—leese  
       *ne*—omitted  
 3398 *good[e]*—goode  
 3399 *reioiseþ*—reioyse  
       *hem*—hym

3399 *þei had[de]*—he hadde  
 3400 [þat]—from C.  
 3401 *had[de]*—hadde  
 3402 *self*—MS. selk  
 3403 *myzt[e] bynym[e]* —  
       myhte be-nyme  
 3404 *owen*—owne  
 3406 *laste*—last

What reward shall he receive? Certainly the  
[\* fol. 27.] fairest and richest of all rewards. Call to mind that excellent corollary I have already given thee, and reason thus:— Since the supreme good is happiness, it follows that all good men are happy in as much as they are good; but if they are happy they must become as it were gods. The reward (*i. e.* divinity) of the righteous is such that no time can impair it, no power can diminish it, nor can any wickedness obscure it. Since, then, happiness belongs to good men, punishment inseparably attends the wicked. For since *good* and *evil* are con-

3424

traries, so are *rewards* and *punishments*. It is evident that rewards follow good actions, and punishments attend evil actions; then as virtue itself is the reward of the virtuous, so vice is the punishment of the vicious. He who is punished with pain and uneasiness knows that he is afflicted with evil. If, then, the wicked did rightly understand themselves they would perceive that they are not exempted from punishment. Since vice, the extreme and worst kind of evil, not only afflicts them, but infects and entirely

good[e]. who is he þat wolde deme þat he þat is ryzt myzty of goode were partles of mede. \*and of what mede shal he be gerdoned. certys of ryzt faire mede and ryzt greet abouen alle medes. ¶ Remembre þe of þilk noble corolarie þat I 3af þe a lytel here byforne. and gadre it to gidre in þis manere. so as god hym self is blisfulnesse. þan is it clere and certeyn. þat alle good folk ben makid blisful for þei ben good[e]. and þilke folk þat ben blisful it accordiþ and is couenable to ben godde[s]. þan is þe mede of goode folk swiche. þat no day [ne] shal enpeyren it. ne no wickednesse shal endirken it. ne power of no wyzt ne shal nat amenusen it þat is to seyn to ben maked goddes. ¶ and syn it is þus þat goode men ne faylen neuer mo of hire medes. ¶ certys no wise man ne may doute of þe vndepartable peyne of shrewes. ¶ þat is to seyn þat þe peyne of shrewes ne departiþ nat from hem self neuer mo. ¶ For so as goode and yuel and peyne and medes ben contrarie it mot nedes ben þat ryzt as we seen by-tiden in gerdoun of goode. þat also mot þe peyne of yuel answer by þe contrarie partye to shrewes. now þan so as bounte and prowesse ben þe medes to goode folk. also is shrewednesse it self torment to shrewes ¶ þan who so þat euer is entecched and defouled wiþ yuel. yif shrewes wolen þan preisen hem self may it semen to hem þat þei ben wiþ outen partye of tourment. syn þei ben swiche þat þe [vtteriste wikkednesse / þat is to seyn wikked thewes / which þat is the] outereste and þe w[or]ste kynde of shrewednesse ne defouliþ nat ne entecehiþ nat hem oonly but infectiþ and enuenemyþ hem gretely ¶ And al so loke on shrewes þat ben þe

3408 good[e]—goode

wolde—wolde

3409 goode—good

of (2)—of the

3411 greet—grete

3412 here byforne—her by-

forn

3413 god—good

3414 is (1)—his

3414 clere—cleer

3415 good[e]—goode

3417 godde[s]—goddes

swiche—swich

3418 [ne]—from C.

endirken—derken

3422 wise man—wysman

þe—omitted

vndepartable—MS. vndir-

partable, C. vndepart-

able

3423 of (1)—of the

3428 answer—answery

þe—omitted

3434 [etteriste—is the]—

from C.

3438 gretely—gretly

contrarie partye of goode men. how grete peyne felawshipeþ *and* folweþ hem. ¶ For þou hast lerned a litel here byforn þat al þing þat is *and* haþ beyng is oon. *and* pilke same oon is good. þan is þis consequence þat it semeþ wel. þat al þat is *and* haþ beyng is good. þis is to seyne. as who seiþ þat beyng *and* vnite *and* goodnesse is al oon. *and* in þis manere it folweþ þan. þat al þing þat faileþ to ben good. it styntiþ forto be. *and* forto haue any beyng. wher fore it is þat shrewes stynten forto ben þat þei weren. but pilke oþer forme of mankynde. þat is to seyne þe forme of þe body wiþ oute. shewiþ ȝit þat þise shrewes were somtyme men. ¶ wher fore whan þei ben peruerted *and* torned in to malice. certys þan han þei forlorn þe nature of mankynde. but so as oonly bounte *and* prowesse may enhawne euery man ouer oþer men. þan mot it nedes be þat shrewes whiche þat shrewednesse haþ cast out of þe condicioun of mankynde ben put vnder þe merite *and* þe deserte of men. þan bitidiþ it þat yif þou seest a wyȝt þat be transformed in to vices. þou ne mayst nat wene þat he be a man. ¶ For ȝif he [be] ardaunt in auarice. *and* þat he be a raunour by violence of foreine rychesse. þou shalt seyn þat he is lyke to a wolf. *and* yif he be felonous *and* wiþ out reste *and* exercise hys tonge to chidynges. þou shalt lykene hym to þe hounde. *and* yif he be a preue awaitour yhid *and* reioyseþ hym to rauysshe by wyles. þou shalt seyne hym lyke to þe fox whelpes. ¶ And yif he be distempre *and* quakiþ for ire men shal wene þat he bereþ þe corage of a lyoun. *and* yif he be dredeful *and* fleynge *and* dredeþ þinges þat ne auȝten nat ben dred. men

pollutes them. But contemplate the punishment of the wicked. You have been taught that *unity* is essential to being and is good—and all that

3443

have this unity are good; whatsoever, then, fails to be good ceases to exist. So that it appears that evil men must cease to be what they were. That they were once men, the outward form of the body, which still remains, clearly testifies. Wherefore, when they degenerate into wickedness they

3452

lose their human nature. But as virtue alone exalts one man above other men, it is evident that vice, which divests a man of his nature, must sink him below humanity. You cannot, therefore, esteem him to be a man whom you see thus transformed by his vices. The greedy robber, you will say, is like a *wolf*.

3461

He who gives no rest to his abusive tongue, you may liken to a *hound*. Does he delight in fraud and trickery? then is he like young *foxes*. Is he intemperate in his anger? then men will compare him to a raging *lion*. If he

3468

be a coward, he will be likened to

3439 *grete*—gret  
3441 *al*—alle  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
3443 *al*—alle  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
3446 *al*—alle  
3447 *haue*—hau  
3448 *stynten*—MS. styntent

3450 *were somtyme*—weeren  
whilom  
3452 *forlorn*—MS. forlorne,  
C. forlorn  
3453 *as*—omitted  
*enhawne*—enhawsen  
3455 *whiche*—which  
*haþ*—MS. haþe

3459 [*be*]—from C.  
3464 *yhid*—MS. yhidde, C.  
I-hidd  
3465 *seyne*—seyn  
3468 *dredeful*—dredful  
3469 *ben*—to ben  
*dred*—MS. dredde, C.  
dredd



a *hart*. If he be slow, dull, and lazy, then is he like an *ass*. Is he fickle and inconsistent? Then is he like a *bird*. Doth he wallow in filthy lusts? Then doth he roll himself in the mire like a nasty *swine*. It follows, then, that he who ceases to be virtuous, ceases to be a man; and, since he cannot attain divinity, he is turned into a beast.

shal holde hym lyke to þe herte. *and* yif he be slowe *and* astoned *and* lache. he lyueþ as an asse. *and* yif he be lyzt *and* vnstedfast of corage *and* chaungeþ ay his studies. he is lickened to briddes. ¶ *and* yif he be plounged in foule *and* vnclene luxuries. he is wipholden in þe foule delices of þe foule soowe. ¶ þan folweþ it þat he þat forletip bountee *and* prowesse. he forletip to ben a man. syn he ne may nat passe in to þe condicioun of god. he is tourned in to a beest. 3478

[\* fol. 27 b.]

\* v[E]LA NARICI DUCIS.

[The 3<sup>le</sup> Metur.]

Ulysses was driven by the eastern winds upon the shores of that isle where Circe dwelt, who, having entertained her guests with magic draughts, transformed them into divers shapes—one into a boar, another into a lion;

E vius þe wynde aryueþ þe sayles of vlixes duc of þe contre of narice. *and* hys wandryng shippes by þe see in to þe isle þere as Circe þe fayre goddesse douzter of þe sonne dwelleþ þat medlyþ to hir newe gestes drynkes þat ben touched *and* maked wip enchaumentz. *and* after þat hir hande myzty of þe herbes had[de] changed hir gestes in to dyuerse maneres. þat oon of hem is couered his face wip forme of a boor. þat oþer is chaunged in to a lyoun of þe contre of marmorike. *and* his nayles *and* his teþe waxen. ¶ þat oþer of hem is newliche chaunged in to a wolf. *and* howeliþ whan he wolde wepe. þat oþer goþ debonairly in þe house as a tigre of Inde. but al be it so þat þe godhed of mercurie þat is cleped þe bride of arcadie haþ had mercie of þe duc vlixes byseged wip diuerse yueles *and* haþ vnbounden hym fro þe pestilence of hys oosteresse algates þe rowers *and* þe maryners hadden by pis ydrawen in to hir mouþes *and* dronken þe wicked[e]

3486

3496

some into howling wolves, and others into Indian tigers.

But Mercury, the Arcadian god, rescued Ulysses from the Circean charms. Yet his mariners, having drunk of her infected drinks, were changed to swine, and fed on acorns.

3470 holde—holden

lyke—lyk

herte—hert

slowe—slowh

3472 vnstedfast—vnstidefast

his—hise

3475 þan—MS. pat, C. thane

3477 passe—passen

3479 aryueþ—aryuede

vlixes—MS. vluxies, C.

vlixes

3481 Circe—Circes

3483 enchaumentz—en-

chaumentz;

3484 hande—hand

of—ouer

3485 had[de]—hadde

gestes—MS. goostes, C.

gestes

3486 boor—boere

3488 his (1)—hise

his teþe—hise teth

3489 newliche—neweliche

3490 goþ—MS. goþe

3491 house—hows

3492 bride—bryd

hap—MS. haþe

3493 mercie—MS. mercurie,

C. mercy

3494 hap—MS. haþe

3495 oosteresse—oostesso

3496 wicked[e]—wikkede

many a noble arive hadde he be." (Cl. Parlyque. 3/60. 26. Avaris)

drynkes þei þat were woxen swyne hadden by þis  
chaunged hire mete of brede forto ete acorns of ookes. 3498

non of hir lymes ne dwelliþ wiþ hem hoole. but  
þei han lost þe voys *and* þe body. Oonly hire þouzt  
dwelleþ wiþ hem stable þat wepiþ *and* bywailiþ þe  
monstruous chaungynge þat þei suffren. ¶ O ouer lyzt

All traces of the human form were lost, and they were bereft of speech. Their souls, unchanged, bewailed their dreadful fate.

hand. as who seiþ. ¶ O feble *and* lyzt is þe hand of  
Circes þe enchaunteresse þat chaungeþ þe bodies of folk  
in to bestes to regarde *and* to comparisoun of mutacioun  
þat is makid by vices. ne þe herbes of circes ne ben nat  
myzty. for al be it so þat þei may chaungen þe lymes  
of þe body. ¶ algates zit þei may nat chaunge þe  
hertes. for wiþ inne is yhid þe strengþe *and* þe vigour

O most weak, are Circe's powers compared with the potency of vice, to transform the human shape!

Circe's herbs may change the body, but cannot touch the mind, the inward strength of man.

3509

of men in þe secre toure of hire hertys. þat is to seyn  
þe strengþe of resoun. but pilke uenymys of vices to-  
drawen a man to hem more myztily þan þe venym of  
circes. ¶ For vices ben so cruel þat þei percen *and*  
þoruþ passen þe corage wiþ inne. *and* þouþ þei ne anoye  
nat þe body. zitte vices wooden to distroien men by  
wounde of þouzt. 3516

But vice is more potent than Circe's poisonous charms.

Though it leaves the body whole, it pierces the inner man, and inflicts a deadly wound upon the soul.

## TUNC EGO FATEOR INQUAM.

þan seide I þus I confesse *and* am aknowe quod I. ne  
I ne se nat þat men may seyn as by ryzt. þat  
shrewes ne ben nat chaunged in to beestes by þe  
qualite of hir soules. ¶ Al be it so þat þei kepen zitte  
þe forme of þe body of mankynde. but I nolde nat of  
shrewes of whiche þe þouzt cruel woodeþ alwey in to  
destruccioun of good[e] men. þat it were leueful to hem  
to done þat. ¶ Certys quod she ne it nis nat leueful  
to hem as I shal wel shewen þe in couenable place.  
¶ But napeles yif so were þat pilke þat men wenen ben

[Theferthe prose.]

B. I confess that vicious men are rightly called beasts. They retain the outward form of man, but the qualities of their souls prove them to be beasts. I wish, however, that the wicked were without the power to annoy and hurt good men.

P. They have no power, as I shall presently show you.

3526

3497 were woxen swyne —  
weeren wexen swyn  
3498 chaunged—Ichaunged  
brede—bred  
forto—MS. and forto  
ete acorns—eten akkornes  
3499 hoole—hool

3501 wepiþ—MS. kepiþ, C.  
weepith  
3502 monstruous—MS. mon-  
stronous, C. Monstruos  
3504 Circes—MS. Cirtes  
folk—folkys [I-hydd  
3509 yhid—MS. yhidde, C.

3515 wooden—MS. wolden,  
C. wooden  
3517 aknowe—aknowe it  
3518 seyn—sayn  
3523 good[e]—goode  
3524 done—don  
3526 ben—be

But were this power, which men ascribe to them, taken away from the wicked, they would be relieved of the greatest part of their punishment. The wicked are more unhappy when they have accomplished their evil designs than when they fail to do so. If it is a miserable thing to will evil, it is a greater unhappiness to have the power to execute it, without which power the wicked desires would languish without effect. Since, then, each of these three things (*i. e.* the will, the power, and the accomplishment of evil) hath its misery, therefore a three-fold wretchedness afflicts those who both will, can, and do commit sin.

3544

*B.* I grant it—but still I wish the vicious were without this misfortune.

[\* fol. 28.]

*P.* They shall be despoiled of it sooner than you wish perhaps, or than they themselves imagine. In the narrow limits of this life, nothing, however tardy it appears, can seem to an immortal soul to have a very long duration. The great hopes, and the subtle machinations of the wicked, are often suddenly frustrated, by which an end is put to their wickedness. If vice renders

leueful for shrewes were bynomen hem. so þat þei ne myzten nat anoyen or don harme to goode men. ¶ Certys a gret party of þe peyne to shrewes shulde ben allegged *and* releued. ¶ For al be it so þat þis ne seme nat credible þing perauenture to somme folk zit mot it nedes be þat shrewes ben more wrecches *and* vnsely. whan þei may don *and* performe þat þei coueiten [than yif they myhte nat complyssen þat they coueyten]. ¶ For yif so be þat it be wrecchednesse to wilne to don yuel: þan is it more wrecchednesse to mowen don yuel. wiþ oute whiche moeuyng þe wrecched wille sholde languisshe wiþ oute effecte. ¶ þan syn þat eueryche of þise þinges haþ hys wrecchednesse. þat is to seyne wil to done yuel. *and* moeuyng to done yuel. it mot nedes be. þat þei (shrewes) ben constreyned by þre vnselynesses þat wolen *and* mowen *and* performen felonyes *and* shrewednesses. ¶ I accorde me *quod* I. but I desire gretely þat shrewes losten sone þilke vnselynesses. þat is to seyne þat shrewes were despoyled of moeuyng to don yuel. ¶ so shullen þei *quod* she. sonnere perauenture þen þou woldest \*or sonnere þen þei hem self wenen to lakken mowynge to done yuel. ¶ For pere nis no þing so late in so short boundes of þis lijf þat is longe to abide. namelyche to a corage inmortal. Of whiche shrewes þe grete hope *and* þe heye compassyngus of shrewednesse is often destroyed by a sodeyne ende or þei ben war. *and* þat þing establiþ to shrewes þe ende of hir shrewednesse. ¶ For yif þat shrewednesse makiþe wrecches. þan mot he nedes be most wrecched þat lengest is a shrewe. þe whiche wiked shrewes wolde ydemen aldirmost vnsely *and*

3527 *for*—to3528 *myzten*—myhte  
*don*—MS. done, C. doon  
*harme*—harm3529 *gret*—MS. grete, C. gret3533-36 *don*—MS. done, C.  
doon3533-34 [*than*—*coueyten*]—  
from C.3537 *moeuyng*—mowynge3537 *wille*—wil3539 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*seyne*—seyn3540 *done* (1)—doon*moeuyng to done*—Mow-  
ynge to don*mot*—MS. mote, C. mot3544 *gretely*—gretly3545 *seyne*—seyn  
*were*—weeren3545 *moeuyng*—mowynge3548 *wenen*—weene  
to lakken — *yuel*—omit-  
ted3549 *pere*—ther

so (2)—the

3550 *longe*—long3552 *shrewednesse*—shrew-  
ednesses  
*often*—ofte



caytifs yif þat hir shrewednes ne were yfynished. at þe leste weye by þe outerest[e] deef. for [yif] I haue concluded soþe of þe vnselynesse of shrewednesse. þan shewep it clerely þat þilke shrewednesse is wiþ outen ende þe whiche is certeyne to ben perdurable. ¶ Certys quod I þis [conclusion] is harde *and* wonderful to graunte. ¶ But I knowe wel þat it accordeþ moche to [the] þinges þat I haue graunted her byforne. ¶ þou hast quod she þe ryzt estimacioun of þis. but who so euere wene þat it be an harde þing to acorde hym to a conclusioun. it is ryzt þat he shewe þat somme of þe premisses ben fals. or ellys he mot shewe þat þe colasioun of preposiciouns nis nat spedful to a necessarie conclusioun. ¶ and yif it be nat so. but þat þe premisses ben ygranted þer nis nat whi he sholde blame þe argument. for þis þing þat I shal telle þe nowe ne shal not seme lasse wondirful. but of þe þinges þat ben taken al so it is necessarie as who so seiþ it folweþ of þat whiche þat is purposed byforne. what is þat quod I. ¶ certys quod she þat is þat þat þise wicked shrewes ben more blyful or ellys lasse wrecches. þat byen þe tourmentes þat þei han deserued. þan yif no peyne of Iustice ne chastied[e] hem. ne þis ne seye I nat now for þat any man myzt[e] þenk[e] þat þe maneres of shrewes ben coriged *and* chastised by veniaunce. *and* þat þei ben brouzt to þe ryzt wey by þe drede of þe tourment. ne for þat þei zeuen to oþer folk ensample to fleyen from vices. ¶ But I vndirstonde zitte [in] an oþer manere þat shrewes ben more vnsely whan þei ne ben nat punished al be it so þat þere ne ben had no resoun or lawe of correccioun. ne none ensample of lokyng. ¶ And what manere

men wretched, the longer they are vicious the longer must they be miserable. And they would be infinitely wretched if death did not put an end to their crimes. It is clear, as I have already shown, that eternal misery is infinite. B. This consequence appears to be just, but difficult to assent to. P. You think rightly; but if you cannot assent to my conclusion you ought to show that the premises are false, or that the consequences are unfairly deduced; for if the premises be granted, you cannot reject the inferences from them. What I am about to say is not less wonderful, and it follows  
3574

necessarily from the same premises.

B. What is that? P. That the wicked who have been punished for their crimes, are happier than if justice had allowed them to go unpunished. I do not appeal to popular arguments, that punishment corrects vice, that the fear of chastisement leads them to take the right path, and that the sufferings of evil-doers deter others from vice, but I believe that guilty men, unpunished, become much more unhappy in another way.  
3588

3558 *shrewednes* — shrewednesse  
yfinished — fynshed  
3559 *weye* — wey  
outerest[e] — owtteryste  
[yif] — from C.  
3560 *soþe* — soth  
3561 *clerely* — cleerly  
3563 [conclusion] — from C.

3563 *harde* — hard  
3564 [the] — from C.  
3567 *harde* — hard  
3568 *fals* — false  
3573 *nowe* — now  
3575 *who so seiþ* — ho seyth  
whiche — which  
3578 *byen* — a-byen  
3579 *chastied[e]* — chastysede

3580 *myzt[e]* — myhte  
3581 *þenk[e]* — thinko  
3584 *zeuen* — MS. zeuene, C.  
yeuen  
fleyen — flen  
3585 *zitte* — yif  
[in] — from C.  
3588 *none* — non

*B.* In what way do you mean?

*P.* Are not good people happy, and evil folk miserable?

*B.* Yes.

*P.* If good be added to the wretchedness of a man, will not he be happier than another whose misery has no element of good in it?

*B.* It seems so.

*P.* And if to the same wretched being another misery be annexed, does not he become more wretched than he whose misery is alleviated by the participation of some good?

## 3602

*B.* He does.

*P.* When evil men are punished they have a degree of good annexed to their wretchedness, to wit, the punishment itself, which as it is the effect of justice is good. And when these wretches escape punishment something more of ill (*i. e.* exemption from punishment) is added to their condition.

*B.* I cannot deny it.

*P.* Much more unhappy are the wicked when they enjoy an unmerited impunity than when they suffer a lawful chastisement. It is just to punish evil-doers, and unjust that they should escape punishment.

[\* fol. 28 b.]

*B.* Nobody denies that.

*P.* Everything, too, which is just

shal þat ben quod I. ouþer þan haþ ben told here byforn ¶ Haue we nat graunted þan quod she þat good[e] folk ben blysful. *and* shrewes ben wrecches. 3is quod I. [thanne quod she] 3if þat any good were added to þe wrecchenesse of any wyzt. nis he nat more blisful þan he þat ne haþ no medelyng of goode in hys solitarie wrecchednesse. so semeþ it quod I. and what seyst þou þan quod she of pilke wrecche þat lakkeþ alle goodes. so þat no goode nis medeled in hys wrecchednesse. *and* 3itte ouer alle hys wickednesse for whiche he is a wrecche þat þer be 3itte anoþer yuel anexid *and* knyt to hym. shal not men demen hym more vnsely þan pilke wrecche of whiche þe vnselynesse is re[le]ued by þe participacioun of som goode. whi sholde he nat quod I. ¶ þan certys quod she han shrewes whan þei ben punissed somewhat of good anexid to hir wrecchednesse. þat is to seyne þe same peyne þat þei suffren whiche þat is good by þe resoun of Iustice. And whan pilke same shrewes ascapen wiþ outen tourment. þan han þei somewhat more of yuel 3it ouer þe wickednesse þat þei han don. þat is to seyde defaute of peyne. whiche defaute of peyne þou hast graunted is yuel. ¶ For þe desert of felonye I ne may nat denye it quod I. ¶ Moche more þan quod she ben shrewes vnsely whan þei ben wrongfully delyuered fro peyne. þan whan þei beþ punissed by ryztful vengeance. but þis is open þing *and* clere þat it is ryzt þat shrewes ben punissed. *and* it is wickednesse *and* wrong þat þei escapin vnpunissed. ¶ who myzt[e] denye \*þat quod I. but quod she may any man denye. þat al þat is ryzt nis good. *and* also þe contrarie. þat alle þat is wrong nis

3599 ouþer—oother  
haþ—MS. haþe

ben—be

told—MS. tolde, C. told

3591 good[e]—goode

3592 [thanne—she]—from C.

3594 blisful—welfare

haþ—MS. haþe

3594-97 goode—good

3598 alle—al

whiche—which

3600 knyt—knytte

3601 re[le]ued—releued

3602 goode—good

3605 seyne—seyn

3606 whiche—which

3607 outen—owte

3609 don—MS. done

seyne—seyn

3610 whiche—which

3611 desert—deserte

3614 beþ—MS. beþe, C. ben

3615 clere—cler

3617 myzt[e]—myhte

3618 is ryzt nis—MS. nis

ryzt is

3619 alle—al

nis wicked—is wykke

wicked. certys quod I pise þinges ben clere ynouȝ, and þat we han concludid a litel here byforne. but I preye þe þat þou telle me yif þou accordest to leten no tourment to þe soules aftir þat þe body is dedid by þe deþe. þis [is] to seyn. vndirstondest þou ouȝt þat soules han any tourment after þe deþe of þe body. ¶ Certis quod she ȝe and þat ryȝt grete. of whiche soules quod she I trowe þat somme ben tourmentid by asprenesse of peyne. and somme soules I trowe be exercised by a purging mekenesse. but my conseil nys nat to determyne of þis peyne. but I haue trauallyd and told it hider to. ¶ For þou sholdest knowe þat þe mowyng [i. myght] of shrewes whiche mowyng þe semeþ to ben. vnworþi nis no mowyng. and eke of shrewes of whiche þou pleynedest þat þei ne were nat punissid. þat þou woldest seen þat þei ne weren neuer mo wiþ outen þe torment of hire wickednesse. and of þe licence of mowyng to done yuel. þat þou preidest þat it myȝt[e] some ben endid. and þat þou woldest fayne lerne. þat it ne sholde nat longe endure. and þat shrewes ben more vnsely yif þei were of lenger duryng. and most vnsely yif þei weren perdurable. and after þis I haue shewed þe þat more vnsely ben shrewes whan þei escapen wiþ oute ryȝtful peyne. þan whan þei ben punissid by ryȝtful uengeaunce. and of þis sentence folweþ it þat þan ben shrewes constreynd atte laste wiþ most greuous tourment. whan men wene þat þei ne ben nat ypunissid. whan I considre þi resouns quod I. I. ne trowe nat þat men seyn any þing more verrely. and yif I tourne aȝeyn to þe studies of men. who is [he] to whom it sholde seme þat [he] ne sholde nat only leuen pise þinges. but eke gladly herkene hem. Certys quod

is good; and, on the contrary, whatsoever is unjust is evil.

B. These are just inferences from our former premises. But is there any punishment for the soul after death of the body?

P. Yes, and great ones too. Some punishments are rigorous and eternal. Others have a corrective and purifying force, and are of finite duration. But this is not to our purpose.

I want you to see that the power of the wicked is in reality nothing, that the wicked never go unpunished; that their licence to do evil is not of long duration, and that the wicked would be more unhappy if it were longer, and infinitely wretched if it were to continue for ever.

3639

After this I showed that evil men are more unhappy, having escaped punishment, than if justly chastised. Wherefore when they are supposed to get off scot-free they suffer most grievously.

B. Your reasoning appears convincing and conclusive. But your arguments are opposed to current opinions, and would hardly command assent, or even a hearing.

3621 here—her  
3623 dedid—endyd  
deþe—deth  
3624 [is]—from C.  
ouȝt—awht  
3625 deþe—deth  
3626 grete—gret  
3628 be—ben

3629 determyne—determenye  
3630 peyne—peynes  
told—MS. tolde  
3632 [i. myght]—from C.  
3632-34 whiche—which  
3633 eke—ek  
3635 seen—seyn  
3637 done—don

3638 myȝt[e]—myhte  
fayne lerne—fayn lernen  
3639 endure—dure  
3645 atte—at the  
laste—MS. past, C. laste  
3647 resouns—resoun  
3649-50 [he]—from C.  
3651 eke—ek



P. It is so. For those accustomed to the darkness of error cannot fix their eyes on the light of perspicuous truth, like birds of night which are blinded by the full light of day. They consider only the gratification of their lusts, they think there is happiness in the liberty of doing evil and in exemption from punishment. Do you attend to the eternal law written in your own heart. Conform your mind to what is good, and you will stand in no need of a judge to confer a reward upon you—for you have it already in the enjoyment of the best of things (*i.e.* virtue). If you indulge in vice, you need no other

3668

chastisement—you have degraded yourself into a lower order of beings. The multitude doth not consider this. What then? Shall we take them as our models who resemble beasts? If a man who had lost his sight, having even forgotten his blindness, should declare that his faculties were all perfect, shall we weakly believe that those who retain their sight are blind? The vulgar will not assent to what I am going to say, though supported by conclusive arguments—to wit, that persons are more unhappy that do wrong

she so it is. but men may nat. for þei han hire eyen so wont to derkenesse of erþely þinges. þat þei may nat liften hem vp to þe lyzt of clere soþefastnes. ¶ But þei ben lyke to briddes of whiche þe nyzt lyztneþ hyre lookyng. and þe day blyndeþ hem. for whan men loken nat þe ordre of þinges but hire lustes and talentz. þei wene þat opir þe leue or þe mowynge to done wickednesse or ellys þe escaping wiþ oute peyne be weleful. but considere þe iugement of þe perdurable lawe. for if þou conferme þi corage to þe beste þinges. þou ne hast no nede to no iuge to ȝiuen þe pris or meede. for þou hast ioigned þi self to þe most excellent þing. and yif þou haue enclined þi studies to þe wicked þinges. ne seek no foreyn wrekere out of þi self. for þou þi self hast þrest þe in to wicked þinges. ryzt as þou myztest loken by dyuerse tymes þe foule erþe and þe heuene.

and þat alle oper þinges stynten fro wiþ oute. so þat þou [nere neyther in heuene ne in erthe] ne say[e] no þing more. þan sholde it semen to þe as by only resoun of lokyng. þat þou were in þe sterres. and now in þe erþe. but þe poeple ne lokeþ nat on þise þinges. what þan shal we þan approchen vs to hem þat I haue shewed þat þei ben lyke to þe bestes. (q. d. non) ¶ And what wilt þou seyne of þis ¶ yif þat a man hadde al forlorn hys syzt. and had[de] forȝeten þat he euer saw and wende þat no þing ne fayled[e] hym of perfeccioun of mankynde. now we þat myzten sen þe same þing wolde we nat wene þat he were blynde (q. d. sic). ne also ne accordeþ nat þe poeple to þat I shal seyne. þe whiche þing is susteyned by a stronge foundement of resouns. þat is to seyn þat more vnselely ben þei

3653 *derkenesse*—*derknesse*  
3654 *clere soþefastnes*—*cleer soþfastnesse*  
3655 *whiche*—*which*  
3658 *opir*—*eyther*  
*done*—*don*  
3659 *escaping*—*schapyng*  
3662 *to* (1)—*of*  
3665 *foreyn*—*foreyne*  
3666 *þrest*—*þhryst*

3666 *wicked*—*wikke*  
3669 [*nere*—*erthe*]—*from C.*  
*heuene*—*C. heuene*  
*say[e]*—*C. saye*  
3672 *on*—*in*  
3674 *lyke*—*lyk*  
*q. d.*—*MS. quod*  
3675 *wilt þou seyne*—*woltow seyn*  
3676 *forlorn*—*MS. forlorne,*

*C. for-lorn*  
*syzt*—*syhte*  
*had[de]*—*hadde*  
3677 *saw*—*MS. sawe, C. sawh*  
*fayled[e]*—*faylede*  
3678 *sen*—*MS. sene, C. sen*  
3679 *þing*—*things*  
*q. d.*—*MS. quod*  
3681 *whiche*—*which*

þat don wrong to oþer folk. þen þei þat þe wrong suffren. ¶ I wolde heren þilke \*same resouns quod I ¶ Deniest þou quod she þat alle shrewes ne ben worþi to han *tourment*. nay quod I. but quod she I am certeyne by many resouns þat shrewes ben vnselely. it accordeþ quod I. þan [ne] dowtest þou nat quod she þat þilke folk þat ben worþi of *tourment* þat þei ne ben wrecches. It accordeþ wel quod I. yif þou were þan quod she yset a Iuge or a knower of þinges. wheþer trowest þou þat men sholde *tourment*[e] hym þat haþ don þe wronge. or hym þat haþ suffred þe wronge. I ne doute nat quod I. þat I nolde don suffissaunt satisfaccioun to hym þat had[de] suffred þe wrong by þe sorwe of hym þat had[de] don þe wronge. ¶ þan semeþ it quod she þat þe doer of wrong is more wrecche þan he þat haþ suffred þe wrong. þat folweþ wel quod [I]. þan quod she by þise causes *and* by oþer causes þat ben enforced by þe same *roate* þat filþe or synne by þe propre nature of it makeþ men wrecches. *and* it sheweþ wel þat þe wrong þat men don nis nat þe wrecchenesse of hym þat receyueþ þe wrong. but þe wrecchednesse of hym þat doþ þe wronge ¶ but certys quod she þise *orators* or *aduocatz* don al þe contrarie for þei enforce hem to *commoeue* þe iuges to han pite of hem þat han suffred *and* resecyued þe þinges þat ben greuous *and* aspre. *and* zitte men sholden more ryztfully han pitee on hem þat don þe greuaunces *and* þe wronges. þe whiche shrewes it were a more couenable þing þat þe *accusours* or *aduocatz* not wroþe but pitous *and* debonaire ladden þe shrewes þat han don wrong to þe Iugement. ryzt as men leden seke folk to þe leche. for þat þei sholden seken out þe maladies of synne by

than those who suffer wrong. [\* fol. 29.]  
B. I would willingly hear your reasons.  
P. Do you deny that every wicked man deserves punishment?  
B. No, I do not.  
P. I am satisfied that impious men are in many ways miserable.  
B. They are so.  
P. Then those that deserve punishment are miserable.  
B. I admit it.  
P. If you were a judge, upon whom would you inflict punishment?  
upon the wrongdoer, or upon the injured?  
B. I should not hesitate to punish the offender as a satisfaction to the sufferer.  
P. Then you would deem the injuring person more unhappy than he who had been wronged?  
B. That follows naturally.  
P. From this then, and other reasons of like nature, it seems  
3703

that vice makes men miserable, and an injury done to any man is the misery of the doer, and not of the sufferer. But our advocates think differently—they try to obtain pity for those that have suffered cruelty and oppression; but the juster pity is really due to the oppressors, who ought, therefore, to be led to judgment as the sick are to the physician, not by angry but by merciful and kind accusers, so that,

3633 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
*oþer*—oother  
3633 [ne]—from C.  
3691 *yset*—MS. ysette, C. yset  
*wheþer*—omitted  
3692 *tourment*[e]—torment-  
3692-3 *haþ*—MS. haþe [en]

3693 *wronge* (2)—wrong  
3695 *had*[de]—hadde  
3696 *had*[de]—hadden  
*wronge*—wrong  
3697 *doar*—doere  
3698 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
3699 [I]—from C.  
3700 *ben*—ben of

3700 *roate*—Roote  
3703-4 *but*—*wronge*—omitted  
3704 *doþ*—MS. doþe  
3711 *wroþe*—wroth  
3712 *þe*—tho  
*don*—MS. done, C. don  
3713 *seke*—syke

by the physic of chastisement, they may be cured of their vices. I would not have the guilty defrauded by their advocates. Their duty is to accuse, and not to excuse offenders. Were

3720

it permitted the wicked to get a slight view of virtue's beauty, which they have forsaken, and could they be persuaded of the purifying effects of lawful chastisement, they surely would not consider punishment as an evil, but

3727

would willingly give themselves up to justice and refuse the defence of their advocates. The wise hate nobody, only a fool hates good men; and it is as irrational to hate the wicked. Vice is a sickness of the soul, and needs our com-

3734

passion, and not our hate, for the distempers of the soul are more deplorable than those of the body, and have more claims upon our compassion.

3740

[The ferthe  
Metur.]

What frenzy causes man to hasten on his fate, that is, by war or by strife. If death is desired he de-

3745

3715 *tourmentz*—torment  
be (2)—omitted  
3719 [to] *stelyn*—to seyn  
3722 *sawen*—sawh  
*sholde*—sholden  
3723 [the]—from C.  
3724 *auzten*—owhite

*tourmentz*. and by þis couenaunt eyþer þe entent of þe defendours or aduocat3 sholde fayle *and* cesen in al. or ellys yif þe office of aduocat3 wolde bettre profiten to men. it sholde be *tourned* in to þe habit of accusacioun. þat is [to] *s[e]lyn* þei sholden accuse shrewes. *and* nat excuse hem. *and* eke þe shrewes hem self. 3it it were leueful to hem to seen at any clifte þe vertue þat þei han forleten. *and* sawen þat þei sholde putten adoun þe filþes of hire vices by [the] *tourmentz* of peynes. þei ne auzten nat ryzt for þe recompensacioun forto geten hem bounte *and* prowess whiche þat þei han lost demene holden þat þilke peynes weren *tourmentes* to hem. *and* eke þei wolden refuse þe attendaunce of hir aduocat3 *and* taken hem self to hire iuges *and* to hir accusours. for whiche it bytideþ [þat] as to þe wise folk þer nis no place ylete to hate. þat is to seyn. þat hate ne haþ no place amonges wise men. ¶ For no wyzt wolde haten gode men. but yif he were ouer moche a sole. ¶ *and* forto haten shrewes it nis no resou. ¶ For ryzt so as languissing is maladie of body. ryzt so ben vices *and* synne maladies of corage. ¶ *and* so as we ne deme nat þat þei þat ben seek of hire body ben worþi to ben hated. but raþer worþi of pite. wel more worþi nat to ben hated. but forto ben had in pite ben þei of whiche þe þouztes ben constrained by felonous wickednesse. þat is more cruel þan any languissinge of body.

## QUID TANTOS IUUAT.

What deliteþ it 3ow to exciten so grete moewynges of hatredes *and* to hasten *and* bisien [the] fatal disposicioun of 3oure deef wiþ 3oure propre handes. þat is to seyn by batailes or [by] contek. for yif 3e axen þe

3725-29 *whiche*—which  
3729 *bytideþ*—MS. byndeþ,  
C. bytidith  
[þat]—from C.  
3730 *ylete*—I-leten  
3731 *haþ*—MS. hape  
3732 *wolde*—nyl

3732 *moche*—mochel  
3733 *sole*—fool  
3736 *seek*—syke  
3743 [the]—from C.  
3745 [by]—from C.



deep it hastisiþ hym of hys owen wille. ne deep ne  
tarieþ nat hys swifte hors. and [the] men þat þe ser-  
pentz and þe lyouns. and þe tigre. and þe beere and þe  
boore seken to sleen wiþ her teþe. 3it þilke same men  
seken to sleen eueryche of hem oþer wiþ swerde. loo for  
her maners ben \* diuerse and discordaunt ¶ þei  
moeuen vnryztful oostes and cruel batailes. and wilne  
to perisse by enterchaungynge of dartes. but þe resoun  
of cruelte nis nat ynouz ryztful. wilt þou þan zelden a  
couenable gerdoun to þe desertes of men ¶ Loue ryzt-  
fully goode folk: and haue pite on shrewes. 3756

HINC EGO UIDEO INQUAM. ET CETERA.

þus see I wel quod I. eyþer what blisfulnesse or ellys  
what vnselinesse is estab[li]ssed in þe desertys of  
goode men and of shrewes. ¶ but in þis ilke fortune  
of poeple I see somewhat of goode. and somewhat of  
yuel. for no wise man haþ nat leuer ben exiled pore  
and nedy and nameles. þan forto dwellen in hys Citee  
and flouren of rychesses. and be redoutable by honoure.  
and stronge of power for in þis wise more clerely and  
more witesfully is þe office of wise men ytretid whan  
þe blisfulnes and [the] pouste of gouernours is as it  
were yshad amonges poeples þat ben ney3boures and  
subgitz. syn þat namely prisoun lawe and þise oþer  
tourmentz of lawful peynes ben raþer owed to felonous  
Citezeins. for þe whiche felonous Citezeins þo peynes  
ben establissed. þan for goode folk. ¶ þan I merueile  
me gretly quod I. whi [þat] þe þinges ben so mys en-  
trechaunged. þat tourmentz of felounes pressen and  
confounden goode folk. and shrewes rauyssen medes of

lays not to come.  
Why do they who  
are exposed to the  
assaults of beasts  
of prey and  
venomous reptiles  
seek to slay each  
other with the  
sword. Lo! their  
manners and  
opinions do not

[\* fol. 29 b.]  
accord, wherefore  
they engage in  
unjust wars, and  
fiercely urge on  
each other's des-  
tiny. But this is  
no just reason for  
shedding blood.  
Wouldst thou re-  
ward each as he  
deserves? Then  
love the good as  
they deserve, and  
have pity upon  
the wicked.

[The fyfthe prose.]

B. I see plainly  
the nature of that  
felicity which at-  
tends the virtues  
of the good, and of  
the misery that  
follows the vices of  
the wicked. But  
in Fortune I see a  
mixture of good  
and evil. The  
wise man prefers  
riches, &c., to

3763

poverty, &c. And  
wisdom appears  
more illustrious,  
when wise men  
are governors and  
impart their  
felicity to their  
subjects; and  
when imprison-  
ment, torture, &c.,  
are inflicted only  
upon bad citizens.

3770

Why, then,  
should things  
undergo so un-  
natural a change?

Why should the  
worthy suffer and  
the vicious re-

3746 *hastisiþ*—hasteth-  
*owen wille*—owne wyl  
3747 *[the]*—from C.  
3749 *boore*—boor  
*teþe*—teth  
3750 *swerde*—sward  
3751 *her*—hir  
3752 *wilne*—wynnen  
3753 *enterchaungynge*—en-

trechaungynge  
3760 *goode*—good  
3761 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*nat*—omitted  
*leuer*—leuere  
3762 *þan*—MS. þat, C. than  
3763 *redoutable*—MS. re-  
dentable, C. redowtable  
3764 *stronge*—strong

3764 *clerely*—clerly  
3766 *[the]*—from C.  
3767 *ney3boures*—nesshe-  
bors  
3769 *lawful*—laweful  
3771 *goode*—good  
3772 *[þat]*—from C.

ceive the reward of virtue? I should like to hear the reason of so unjust a distribution. I should not marvel so much if *Chance* were the cause of all this confusion. But I am overwhelmed with astonishment when I reflect, that God the director of all things thus unequally distributes rewards and punishments. What difference is there, then, unless we know the cause, between God's proceedings and the operations of *Chance*? P. It is not at all surprising that you think you see irregularities, when you are ignorant of that order by which God proceeds. But, forasmuch as God, the good governor, presides over all, rest assured that all things are done rightly and as they ought to be done.

[\* MS. arituri]  
[The fyfthe  
Metur.]

He who knows not that the Bear is seen near the Pole, nor has observed the path of Boötes, will marvel at their appearance.

The vulgar are alarmed when shadows terrestrial obscure the moon's brightness, causing the stars to be displayed.

3775 *grete*—gret  
3776 *to witen*—forto weten  
3778 *trowed[e]*—trowede  
*alle*—al  
3779 *were*—weeren  
*fortuouse*—fortunous  
3780 *myne*—myn  
3781 *good[e]*—goode  
3782 *quel*—yuelis  
3783 *hardnesse*—hardnesses

3784 [*he*]—from C.  
*wille*—wyl  
3785 *difference*—MS. differ-  
3786 *dop*—MS. dope [ence]  
*hap*—happe  
3787 [*it*]—from C.  
*it*—ne it  
3788 *confus*—confuse  
3789 *alle*—al  
3791 *good[e]*—goode

3793 *ne*—omitted  
3794 *arctour*—MS. aritour  
3795 *neye*—neygh  
3796 *seyne*—seyn  
*neye*—nygh  
3797-99 *boetes*—MS. boeces,  
C. boetes  
3798 *his* (1)—hise  
*wey[n]es*—weynes  
3802 *ful[le]*—fullie

vertue *and* ben in honours. *and* in grete estatis. and I desire eke to witen of þe. what semep þe to ben þe resoun of þis so wrongful a confusioun ¶ For I wolde wondre wel þe lasse yif I trowed[e] þat alle þise þinges were medeled by fortuouse hap. ¶ But now hepeþ *and* encreseþ myne astonyenge god governour of þinges. þat so as god zeueþ ofte tymes to good[e] men goodes *and* myrþes. *and* to shrewes yuel and aspre þinges. *and* zeueþ azeynewarde to goode folk hardnesse. *and* to shrewes [he] graunteþ hem her wille *and* þat þei desiren. what difference þan may þer be bitwixen þat þat god dop. *and* þe hap of fortune. yif men ne knowe nat þe cause whi þat [it] is. it nis no merueile quod she þouz þat men wenen þat þer be somewhat folysche and confus whan þe resoun of þe order is vnknowe. ¶ But alle þouz þou ne know nat þe cause of so gret a disposicioun. napeles for as moche as god þe good[e] governour attempreþ *and* gouerneþ þe world. ne doute þe nat þat alle þinges ne ben doon aryzt. 3793

## SI QUIS ARCTURI \* SYDERA.

Who so þat ne knowe nat þe sterres of arctour ytourned neye to þe souereyne cōtre or point. þat is to seyne ytourned neye to þe souereyne pool of þe firmament *and* woot nat whi þe sterre boetes passeþ or gaderiþ his wey[n]es. *and* drencheþ his late flaumbes in þe see. *and* whi þat boetes þe sterre vnfoldiþ his ouer swifte arisynges. þan shal he wondren of þe lawe of þe heye eyre. *and* eke if þat he ne knowe nat why þat þe hornes of þe ful[le] moene waxen pale *and* infect by þe boundes of þe derke nyzt ¶ *and* how þe moene dirk

and confuse discourerþ þe sterres. þat she had[de] ycouered by hir clere visage. þe commune errour moeueþ folk and makip wery hir bacines of bras by þikke strookes. þat is to seyne þat þer is a maner poeple þat hyzt[e] coribandes þat wenen þat whan þe moone is in þe eclips þat it be enchauntid. and þefore forto rescowe þe moone þei betyn hire basines wiþ þikke strokes. ¶ Ne no man ne wondreþ whan þe blastes of þe wynde chorus betyn þe strondes of þe see by quakyng floodes. ne no man ne wondreþ whan þe weyzt[e] of þe snowe yhardid by þe colde. is resolued by þe brennyng hete of phebus þe sonne. ¶ For here seen men redyly þe causes. but þe \* causes yhid þat is to seye in heuene trouble þe brestes of men. ¶ þe moeueable poeple is a-stoned of alle þinges þat comen selde and sodeynely in oure age. but yif þe troublly errour of oure ignorance departid[e] from vs. so þat we wisten þe causes whi þat swiche þinges bitiden. certys þei sholden cesse to seme wondres.

3822

## ITA EST INQUAM.

þvs is it quod I. but so as þou hast zeuen or byhyzt me to vnwrappen þe hidde causes of þinges ¶ and to discoureren me þe resouns couered with dirknesses I preye þe þat þou diuise and Iuge me of þis matere. and þat þou do me to vndrestonden it. ¶ For þis miracle or þis wondre troubleþ me ryzt gretely. and þan she a litel [what] smylyng seide. ¶ þou clepest me quod she to telle þing. þat is grettest of alle þinges þat mowen ben axed. ¶ And to þe whiche questioun vnneþ[e]s is þere auzt ynow to lauen it. as who seiþ. vnneþes is þer suffisauntly any þing to answeere perfitly to þi questioun.

Thinking the eclipse the result of enchantment, they sought to destroy the charms by the tinkling of brazen vessels or cymbals. Yet none marvel when the north-west wind renders the sea tempestuous; nor when vast heaps of congealed snow are melted by the warm rays of the sun, because the causes are apparent.

3813

Things whose causes are unknown disquiet the human mind.

[\* fol. 30.]

The fickle mob stands amazed at every rare or sudden phenomenon. Fear and wonder, however, soon cease when ignorance gives place to certain knowledge.

[The sixte prose; B. So it is. But as thou hast promised to unfold the hidden causes of things, and unveil things wrapt up in darkness: I pray thee deliver me from my present perplexity, and explain the mystery I mentioned to you. P. You ask me to declare to you the most intricate of all questions, which I am afraid can scarce be answered.

3833

3304 had[de]—hadde  
3306 bacines—MS. batines  
þikke—MS. þilke, C. thilke  
3307 seyne—seyn  
3308 hyzt[e]—hihte  
3309 eclips—eclypse  
3312 chorus—MS. thorus, C.  
chorus  
3313 snowe—sonwh = snowh

3815 here—her  
redyly—redely  
3816 yhid—MS. yhidde, C.  
I-hid  
seye—seyn  
3817 trouble—trowblen  
3820 departid[e] from — de-  
partede fro  
3823 byhyzt—by-hyhte

3824 hidde—hyd  
3826 preye—preey  
diuise—deuysse  
3827 do—don  
3828 gretely—gretly  
3829 [what]—from C.  
3832 þere auzt—ther awht



For the subject is of such a kind, that when one doubt is removed, innumerable others, like the heads of the hydra, spring up. Nor would there be any end of them unless they were restrained by a quick and vigorous effort of the mind. The question whereof you want a solution embraces the five following points: 1. Simplicity, or unity of Providence. 2. The order and course of Destiny. 3. Sudden chance. 4. Prescience of God, and divine predestination. 5. Free-will. I will try to treat of these things:— Resuming her discourse as from a new principle,

3849

Philosophy argued as follows:— The generation of all things, every progression of things liable to change, and everything that moveth, derive their causes, order, and form from the immutability of the divine understanding. Providence directs all things by a variety of means. These means, referred only to the divine intelligence, are called Providence; but when contemplated in relation to the things which receive motion and order from them, are called Destiny. Reflection on the efficacy of the one and the other will soon

¶ For þe matere of it is swiche þat whan oon doute is determined *and* kut away þer wexen oþer doutes wiþ-  
outen noumbre. ryzt as þe heuedes waxen of ydre þe  
serpent þat hercules slou3. ¶ Ne þere ne were no  
manere ne noon ende. but yif þat a wyzt constreined[e]  
þo doutes. by a ryzt lyuely *and* a quik fire of þouzt. þat  
is to seyn by<sup>s</sup> vigour *and* strengþe of witte. ¶ For in  
þis matere men weren wont to maken questiouns of þe  
simplicite of þe purueaunce of god *and* of þe ordre of  
destine. *and* of sodeyne hap. *and* of þe knowyng *and*  
*predestinacioun* deuine *and* of þe lyberte of fre wille.  
þe whiche þing þou þi self aperceiust wel of what weyzt  
þei ben. but for as mochel as þe knowynge of þise  
þinges is a manere porcioun to þe medicīne to þe. al be it  
so þat I haue lytel tyme to don it. 3it naþeles I wole  
enforcen me to shewe somewhat of it. ¶ but al þou3  
þe norissinges of dite of musike deliteþ þe þow most  
suffren. *and* forberen a litel of þilk delite while þat I  
weue (contexo) to þe resouns yknyt by ordre ¶ As it likeþ  
to þe quod I so do. ¶ þo spak she ryzt a[s] by an oþer  
bygynnyn[ge] *and* seide þus. ¶ þe engendrynge of alle  
þinges quod she *and* alle þe progressiouns of muuable  
nature. *and* alle þat moeueþ in any manere takiþ hys  
causes. hys ordre. *and* hys formes. of þe stablenesse of þe  
deuyne þouzt [*and* thilke deuyne thowht] þat is yset *and*  
put in þe toure. þat is to seyne in þe heyzt of þe sim-  
plicite of god. stablisþ many manere gyses to þinges þat  
ben to don. ¶ þe whiche manere whan þat men loken  
it in þilke pure clerenesse of þe deuyne intelligence. it  
is ycleped purueaunce ¶ but whan þilke manere is re-

3834 swiche—wyche

oon—o

3835 wiþouten noumbre —  
with-owte noumbyr

3836 waxen—wexen

3837 þere—ther

3838 constreined[e] — con-  
streynede

3839 lyuely—lyfly

3840 witte—wit

3843 hap—happe

3845 weyzt—wyht

3848 wole—wol

3850 þow—MS. now, C. þou  
most suffren—MS. moste  
to souereyne; C. most  
suffren

3851 þilk—thilke

3853 þo—so

spak—MS. spake, C. spak

3853 a[s]—as

3856 alle—al

3858 [*and*—*thowht*]—from  
C.

yset—MS. ysette, C. yset

3859 toure—towr

seyne—seyu

heyzt—heyhte

3861 don—done

3862 clerenesse—klenesse

ferred by *men* to þinges þat it moeuþ *and* disponeþ þan of olde men. it was cleped destine. ¶ þe whiche þinges yif þat any wyzt lokeþ wel in his þouzt. þe strengþe of þat oon *and* of þat oþer he shal lyztly mowen seen þat þise two þinges ben diuers. ¶ For *purueaunce* is þilke deuyne resoun þat is establissed in þe souereyne prince of þinges. þe whiche *purueaunce* disponiþ alle þinges. but destine is þe disposicioun *and* ordenaunce cleuyng to moeuable þinges. by þe whiche disposicioun þe *purueaunce* knyteþ alle þinges in hire ordres. ¶ For *purueaunce* embraceþ alle þinges to hepe. al þouþ þat þei ben dyuerse *and* al þouþ þei ben wiþ outen fyn. but destynie departeþ *and* ordeyneþ alle þinges singlerly *and* diuideþ. in moeuynges. in places. in formes. in tymes. departiþ [as] þus. so þat þe vnfolding of temporel ordenaunce assembled *and* ooned in þe loking of þe deuyne þouzt ¶ Is *purueaunce* *and* þilke same assemblynge. *and* oonyng diuided *and* vnfolden by tymes. lat þat ben called destine. *and* al be \* it so þat þise þinges ben dyuerse. zitte napeles hangeþ þat oon on þat oþer. forwhi þe ordre destinal procediþ of þe simplicitie of *purueaunce*. for ryzt as a werkman þat aperceiueþ in hys þouzt þe forme of þe þing þat he wil make moeuþ þe effect of þe werke. *and* lediþ þat he had[de] loked byforne in hys þouzt symply *and* presently by temporel þouzt. ¶ Certys ryzt so god disponiþ in hys *purueaunce* singlerly *and* stably þe þinges þat ben to done. but he amynistreþ in many maneres *and* in dyuerse tymes by destyne. þilke same þinges þat he haþ disponed þan wheþir þat destine be excercised. eyþer by somme dyuyne spirites seruauntez to þe deuyne *purueaunce*. or ellys by somme soule (*anima*

cause us to see their differences. Providence is the divine intelligence manifested in the disposition of worldly affairs. Destiny or Fate is that inherent estate or condition of movable things by means whereof Providence retains them in the order in which she has placed them. Providence embraces all things, although diverse and infinite; but Fate gives motion to every individual thing, and in the place and under the form appropriated to it. So that the explication of this order of things wrapt up in the divine intelligence is Providence; and being unfolded according to time and other circum-

3880

stances, may be called Fate.

Though these

[\* fol. 30 b.]

things appear to differ, yet one of them depends on the other, for the order of Fate proceeds from the unity of Providence. For as a workman, who has formed in his head the plan of a work which he is desirous to finish, executes it afterwards, and produces after a time all the different parts of the model which he has conceived; so God in the plan of his Providence disposes everything to be brought about in a certain order and in a proper time; and afterwards, by the ministry of Fate,

3872 *cleuyng*—*cluyng*e3875 *wiþ outen fyn*—*Infynyte*3876 *singlerly*—*syngulerly*3877 *in* (3)—*MS. and, C. in*3878 *departiþ*—*omitted*[*as*]*—from C.*3878 *so þat*—*lat*3884 *on*—*of*3886 *wil*—*wol*3888 *had[de]*—*hadde**symply*—*symplely*3889 *þouzt*—*ordinaunce*3890 *singlerly*—*syngulerly*3890 *stably*—*stablye*3893 *haþ*—*MS. haþe*3894 *eyþer*—*owther**seruauntez*—*MS. seru-  
auncez*3895 *somme*—*som*

he accomplishes what he has planned, conformably to that order and that time. So then, however Fate be exercised, it is evident that things subject to Destiny are under the control of Providence, which disposes Destiny. But some things under Providence are exempt from the control of Fate; being stably fixed near to the Divinity himself, and beyond the movement of Destiny. For even, as among several circles revolving round one common centre, that which is innermost approaches nearest to the simplicity of the middle points, and is, as it were, a centre, round which the outward ones revolve; whilst the

3912

outermost, revolving in a wider circumference, the further it is from the centre describes a larger space—but yet, if this circle or anything else be joined to the middle point, it is constrained to be immovable. By parity of reason, the further anything is removed from the first intelligence, so much the more is it under the control of Destiny; and the nearer anything approaches to this Intelligence, the centre of all things, the more stable it becomes, and the less dependent upon Destiny.

mundi). or ellys by al nature seruyng to god. or ellys by þe celestial moeuynge of sterres. or ellys by þe vertue of aungels. or ellys by þe dyuerse subtilite of deueles. or ellys by any of hem. or ellys by hem alle þe destynal ordynaunce is ywouen or accomplished. certys it is open þing þat þe purueaunce is an vnmoeueable *and* symple forme of þinges to done. *and* þe moeueable bonde *and* þe temporel ordynaunce of þinges whiche þat þe deuyne simplicitie of purueaunce haþ ordeyned to done. þat is destine. For whiche it is þat alle þinges þat ben put vndir destine ben certys subgitz to purueaunce. to whiche purueaunce destine it self is subgit *and* vndir. ¶ But somme þinges ben put vndir purueaunce þat sourmounten þe ordinaunce of destine. *and* þo ben pilke þat stably ben yficched ney to þe first godhed þei sourmounten þe ordre of destinal moeuablite. ¶ For ryzt as cercles þat tournen aboute a same Centre or about a poynt. pilke cercle þat is inrest or moost wiþynne ioineþ to þe symplesse of þe myddel *and* is as it were a Centre or a poynt to þat oþer cercles þat tournen abouten hym. ¶ *and* pilke þat is outerest compased by larger envyronnyng is vnfolden by larger spaces in so mochel as it is forþest fro þe mydel symplicitie of þe poynt. *and* yif þer be any þing þat knytteþ *and* felawshippeþ hym selfe to pilke mydel poynt it is constreyned in to symplicitie. þat is to seyn in to [vn]moeueablete. *and* it ceseth to ben shad *and* to fletin dyuersly. ¶ Ryzt so by semblable resoun. pilke þinge þat departiþ firþest fro þe first þouzt of god. it is vnfolden *and* summittid to grettere bondes of destine. *and* in so moche is þe þing more free *and* lovs fro destyne as it axeþ *and*

3906 *al*—alle3907 *moeuyng*—moeuynges3900 *ywouen*—MS. ywonnen,  
C. ywouten*or—and*3902 *bonde*—bond3904 *haþ*—MS. haþe3905 *whiche*—which3912 *as*—as of3913 *about*—a-bowte*inrest*—innerest3917 *larger* (1)—a large3918 *mochel*—moche*forþest*—ferthere3920 *selfe*—self

3921 [vn]moeueablete — vn-

moenablete

3922 *ceseth*—MS. fleþe, C.*cesith*3923 *þinge*—thing3924 *of*—MS. to, C. of3926 *lovs*—laus



holdeþ hym ner to pilke Centre of þinges. þat is to seyne god. ¶ and if þe þinge cleueþ to þe stedfastnesse of þe þouzt of god. and be wiþ oute moeuynge certys it sourmounteþ þe necessite of destyne. þan ryzt swiche comparisoun as [it] is of skilynge to vndirstondyng and of þing þat is engendred to þing þat is. and of tyme to eternite. and of þe cercle to þe Centre. ryzt so is þe ordre of moeueable destine to þe stable symplicite of purueaunce. ¶ pilke ordinaunce moeueþ þe heuene and þe sterres and attempereþ þe elymenz to gider amonges hem self. and transformeþ hem by enterchaungable mutacioun. ¶ and pilke same ordre neweþ azein alle þinges growyng and fallyng a-doune by sembleables progressiouns of seedes and of sexes. þat is to sein. male and female. and þis ilke ordre constreyneþ þe fortunes and þe dedes of men by a bonde of causes nat able to ben vnbounden (indissolubili). þe whiche destinal causes whanne þei passen oute fro þe bygynnynges of þe vnmoeueable purueaunce it mot nedes be þat þei ne be nat mutable. and þus ben þe þinges ful wel ygouerned. yif þat þe symplicite dwellynge\* in þe deuyne þouzt sheweþ furþe þe ordre of causes. vnable to be I-bowed. and þis ordre constreyneþ by hys propre stablete þe moeueable þinges. or ellys þei sholde fleten folily for whiche it is þat alle þinges semen to be confus and trouble to vs men. for we ne mowe nat considere pilke ordinaunce. ¶ Napeles þe propre manere of euery þing dressyng hem to goode disponit hem alle. for þere nis no þinge don for cause of yuel. ne pilke þing þat is don by wicked[e] folk nis nat don for yuel þe whiche shrewes as I haue shewed [ful] plentiuously

And if we suppose that the thing in question is joined to the stability of the supreme mind, it then becomes immovable, and is beyond the necessity and power of destiny. As reasoning is to the understanding, as that which is produced to that which exists of itself, as time to eternity, as the circle to the centre, so is the movable order of Fate to the stable simplicity of Providence. Destiny rules nature. It controls the actions of men by an indissoluble chain of causes, and is, like their

3941  
origin, immutable. Thus, then, are all things well conducted, since that invariable order of cause has its origin in the simplicity of the Divine mind, and by its inherent immutability ex-

[\* fol. 31.]  
ercises a restraint upon mutable things, and preserves them from irregularity. To those who understand not this order, things appear confused—nevertheless, the proper condition of all things directs and inclines it to their true good. For there is nothing done for the sake of evil, not eve by the wicked, who, in seeking for felicity, are led astray by crooked error.

3927 *ner*—*nerre*  
3928 *seyne*—*seyn*  
þinge cleueþ — thing  
clyueth  
stedfastnesse — stydefastnesse  
3930 *swiche*—*swych*  
3931 [*it*]*—*from C.  
3932 *to* (2)—MS. of, C. to

3937 *enterchaungable*—MS.  
enterchaungyngable, C.  
entrechangeable  
3939 *a-doune*—*a-down*  
sembleables—semblable  
3942 *bonde*—*bond*  
3943 *ben vnbounden*—*be vnboundne*  
3944 *oute*—*owt*

3948 *furþe*—*forth*  
3949 *I-bowed*—MS. vnbounden, C. I-bowed  
3950 *sholde*—*sholden*  
3951 *whiche*—*which*  
3952 *moue*—*mowen*  
3956 *wicked[e]*—*wykkeðe*  
3957 [*ful*]*—*from C.

But the order proceeding from the centre of supreme goodness does not mislead any. But you may say, what greater confusion can there be than that both prosperous and adverse things should at times happen to good men, and that evil men should at one time enjoy their desires and at another be tormented by hateful things. Are men wise enough to discover, whether those whom they believe to be virtuous or wicked, are so in reality? Opinions differ as to this matter. Some who are deemed worthy of reward by one person, are deemed unworthy by another. But, suppose it were possible for one to distinguish

3975

with certainty between the good and the bad? Then he must have as accurate a knowledge of the mind as one has of the body. It is miraculous to him who knows it not, why sweet things are agreeable to some bodies, and bitter to others; why some sick persons are relieved by lenitives and others by sharper remedies. It is no marvel to the leech, who knows the causes of disease, and their cures. What constitutes the health of the mind, but goodness? And what are its maladies, but vice? Who is the preserver of good,

seken goode. but wicked errorr mystourniþ hem. ¶ Ne þe ordre comynge fro þe poynt of souereyne goode ne declineþ nat fro hys bygynnyng. but þou mayst sein what vnreste may ben a wors confusioun þan þat goode men han somme tyme aduersite. and somtyme prosperite. ¶ and shrewes also han now þinges þat þei desiren. and now þinges þat þei haten ¶ wheþer men lyuen now in swiche hoolnesse of þouzt. as who seiþ. ben men now so wise. þat swiche folk as þei demen to ben goode folk or shrewes þat it mot nedes ben þat folk ben swiche as þei wenen. but in þis manere þe domes of men discorden. þat þilke men þat somme folk demen worþi of mede. oþer folk demen hem worþi of tourment. but lat vs graunt[e] I pose þat som man may wel demen or knowen þe goode folk and þe badde. May he þan knowen and seen þilke inrest attemperance of corages. as it haþ ben wont to be said of bodyes. as who saiþ may a man speken and determine of attemperance in corages. as men were wont to demen or speken of complexiouns and attemperances of bodies (q' non). ne it [ne] is nat an vnlyke miracle to hem þat ne knowen it nat. ¶ As who seiþ. but is lyke a merueil or a miracle to hem þat ne knowen it nat. whi þat swete þinges [ben] couenable to some bodies þat ben hool and to some bodies bittre þinges ben couenable. and also whi þat some seke folk ben holpen with lyzt medicines [and some folk ben holpen with sharppe medicynes] but napeles þe leche þat knoweþ þe manere and þe attemperance of heele and of maladie ne merueileþ of it no þing. but what oþer þing semeþ hele of corages but bounte and prowesse. and what oþer þing semeþ maladie of corages but vices. who is ellys kepere of good or

3958-9 *goode*—good  
3960 *declineþ*—MS. *enclineþ*,  
C. *declynyth*  
3961 *wors*—worse  
3962 *somme tyme*—somtyme  
3965 *swiche*—swych  
3967 *goode*—good

3967 *mot*—moste  
3971 *graunt[e]*—graunte  
3973 *inrest*—Inneryste  
3974 *haþ*—MS. *habe*  
*said*—MS. *saide*, C. *seyd*  
3975 *determine*—determinen  
3978 [*ne*]—from C.

3978 *vnlyke*—vn-lyk  
3979 *lyke*—lik  
3981 [*ben*]—from C.  
*hool*—hool  
3984 [and—*medicynes*]—  
from C.

dryuere away of yuel but god *gouernour and* leecher of pouztes. þe whiche god whan he haþ by-holden from þe heye toure of hys *purueaunce* he knoweþ what is couenable to euery wyzt. *and* leneþ hem þat he wot [þat] is couenable to hem. Loo here of comeþ *and* here of is don þis noble miracle of þe ordre *destinal*. whan god þat alle knoweþ doþ swiche þing. of whiche þing [þat] vnknowyng folk ben astoned but forto *constreine* as who seiþ ¶ But forto *comprehende and* telle a fewe þinges of þe *deuyne depnesse* þe whiche þat mans *resoun* may vnderstonde. ¶ þilk man þat þou wenest to ben ryzt *Iuste and* ryzt kepyng of equite. þe contrarie of þat semeþ to þe *deuyne purueaunce* þat al woot. ¶ And *lucan* my familier telleþ þat þe victories cause liked[e] to þe *goddes and* causes ouercomen liked[e] to *catoun*. þan what so euer þou mayst seen þat is don in þis [world] vnhoped or vnwened. certys it is þe ryzt[e] ordre of þinges. but as to þi wicked[e] oppinioun it is a *confusioun*. but I suppose þat som man be so wel ypewed. þat þe *deuyne Iugement and* þe Iugement of mankynde accorden hem to gidre of hym. but he is so vnstedfast of corage [þat] yif any aduersite come to hym he wolde for-leten *perauenture* to continue *innocence* by þe whiche he ne may nat wipholden fortune. ¶ þan þe wise *dispensacioun* of god spareþ hym þe whiche *manere aduersite* \*myzt[e] enpeyren. ¶ For þat god wil nat suffren hym to trauaile. to whom þat trauaylnis nat couenable. ¶ An oþer man is *perfit* in alle uertues. *and* is an holy man *and* neye to god so þat þe *purueaunce* of god wolde demen þat it were a felony þat he were touched wip any aduersites. so þat he ne

or the driver away of evil, but God, the physician of souls, who knows what is necessary for men, and bestows it upon them? From this source spring that great marvel—the order of *destiny*—wrought by the wisdom of God, and marvelled at by ignorant men. But, now let us notice a few things concerning the depth of the Divine knowledge which human reason may comprehend. The man you deem just, may appear otherwise to the omniscient eye of Providence. When you see apparent irregularities—unexpected and un-

4004 wished for—deem them to be rightly done. Let us suppose a man so well behaved, as to be approved of God and man—but not endowed with firmness of mind, so that the reverses of fortune will cause him to forgo his probity, since with it he cannot retain his prosperity. A wise Providence, knowing that adversity might destroy this man's integrity, averts from him that

[\* fol. 31 b.] adversity which he is not able to sustain. Another man is thoroughly virtuous, and approaches to the purity of the deity—him Providence deems it an injustice to oppress by adversity, and therefore exempts

3991 *hap*—MS. *habe*  
3993 *wot*—MS. *wote*, C. *wot*  
3994 [þat]—from C.  
3995 *don*—MS. *done*, C. *don*  
*miracle*—MS. *mirache*, C.  
*miracle*  
*ordre*—MS. *ordre* of  
3996 *alle*—al  
*doþ*—MS. *doþe*

3996 *whiche*—which  
3997 [þat]—from C.  
3999 *mans*—mannes  
4000 *pilk*—thilke  
4004 *liked[e]* (*both*)—lykede  
4005 *is don*—MS. is to don  
4006—[*world*]—from C.  
*ryzt[e]*—ryhte  
4007 *wicked[e]*—wykkede

4010 *vnstedfast*—vnstydefast  
4011 [þat]—from C.  
*wolde*—wol  
4015 *manere*—man  
*myzt[e]*—myhte  
4016 *wil*—wol  
4018 *neye*—negh



him even from bodily disease. Providence often gives the direction of public affairs to good men, in order to curb and restrain the malice of the wicked. To some is given a mixture of good and evil, according to what is most suitable to the dispositions of their minds. Upon some are laid moderate afflictions, lest they wax proud by too long a course of prosperity. Others suffer great adversities that their virtues may be exercised, and strengthened by the practice of patience. Some fear to be afflicted with what they are able to endure. Others despise

4036

what they are unable to bear; and God punishes them with calamities, to make them sensible of their presumption. Many have purchased a great name by a glorious death. Others by their unshaken fortitude, have shown that virtue cannot be overcome by adversity. These things are done justly, and in order, and are for the good of those to whom they happen. From the same causes it happens, that sometimes adversity and sometimes prosperity falls to the lot of the wicked. None are surprised to see bad men afflicted—they get

wil nat suffre þat swiche a man be moeued wip any manere maladie. ¶ But so as seide a philosophre [the moore excellent by me]. þe aduersites comen nat (he seide in grec!) þere þat uertues han edified þe bodie of þe holy man. and ofte tyme it bitideþ þat þe somme of þinges þat ben to don is taken to good folk to gouerne. for þat þe malice habundaunt of shrewes sholde ben abatid. and god zeueþ and departiþ to oþer folk prosp[er]ites and aduersites ymedeled to hepe aftir þe qualite of hire corages and remordip som folk by aduersites. for þei ne sholden nat wexen proude by longe welefulnesse. and oþer folk he suffreþ to ben trauayled wip harde þinges. ¶ For þat þei sholden conferme þe vertues of corage by þe vsage and exercitacioun of pacience. and oþer folke dreden more þen þei auzten þe wiche þei myzt[en] wel beren. and pilke folk god ledip in to experience of hem self by aspre and sorweful þinges. ¶ And many oþer folk han bouzt honorable renoune of þis worlde by þe pris of glorious deþ. and som men þat ne mowen nat ben ouer-comen by tourment han zeuen ensample to oþer folk þat vertue ne may nat be ouer-comen by aduersites. ¶ and of alle þise þinges þer nis no doute þat þei ne ben don ryztfully and ordeinly to þe profit of hem to whom we seen þise þinges bitide. ¶ For certys þat aduersite comeþ some tyme to shrewes. and some tyme þat þei desiren it comeþ of þise forseide causes and of sorweful þinges þat bytyden to shrewes. Certys no man ne wondreþ. For alle men wenen þat þei han wel deserued it. and þei ben of wicked merite of whiche

4021 wil—wol  
swiche—swych  
4022 manere—bodily  
4022-3 [the—me]—from C.  
4023 þe aduersites—nat  
—omitted  
4024 þere—omitted  
4026 don—done  
to (2)—MS. so  
to good—gouerne—to  
gouerne to goode folk

4028 oþer—oother  
4030 som—some  
4031 sholden—sholde  
4033 conferme—confermen  
4034 corage—corages  
4036 myzt[en]—myhten  
4037 hem—hym  
sorweful—sorwful  
4038 oþer—oother  
4039 worlde—world  
of (2)—of the

4041 oþer—oother  
4046 comeþ—comth  
some (both)—som  
þat þei—MS. þei þat, C.  
þat that they  
4047 comeþ—comth  
sorweful—sorwful  
4050 wicked—wykkede  
merite—MS. uerite, C.  
meryte

shrewes þe *tourment* som tyme agastep oþer to done folies. *and* som tyme it amendeþ hem þat suffren þe *tourmentis*. ¶ And þe *prosperite* þat is zeuen to shrewes sheweþ a grete argument to good[e] folk what þing þei sholde demen of þilk wilfulnesse þe whiche *prosperite* men seen ofte serue to shrewes. in þe whiche þing I trowe þat god dispensiþ. for *perauenture* þe nature of som man is so ouerþrowyng to yuel *and* so vncouenable þat þe nedy pouerte of hys house-hold my3t[e] raper egren hym to done felonies. and to þe *maladie* of hym god puttiþ remedie to ziuen hym *rychesse*. *and* som oþer man byholdiþ hys conscience defouled wiþ synnes *and* mak iþ *comparisoun* of his fortune *and* of hym self ¶ and dred iþ *perauenture* þat hys blisfulnesse of whiche þe vsage is ioyful to hym þat þe lesynge of þilke blisfulnesse ne be nat sorweful to hym. *and* þefore he wol chaunge hys maneres. and for he dred iþ to lese hys fortune. he forlet iþ hys wickednesse. to oþer folk is welefulnesse yzeuen vnworþily þe whiche ouerþroweþ hem in to *destruccion* þat þei han deserued. and to som oþer folk is zeuen power to punissen. for þat it shal be cause of *continuacion* *and* exercisinge to good[e] folk. *and* cause of *tourment* to shrewes. ¶ For so as þer nis none alyauce bytwixe good[e] folke *and* shrewes. ne shrewes ne mowen nat accorden amonges hem self *and* whi nat. for shrewes discorden of hem self by her vices þe whiche vices al to renden her consciences. *and* don oft[e] tyme þinges þe whiche þinges whan þei han don hem. þei demen þat þo þinges ne sholde nat han ben don. for whiche þinge þilke souereyne *purueance* haþ maked oft[e] tyme

what they deserve. Their punishment, too, may cause amendment, or deter others from like vices. When the wicked enjoy felicity—the good should learn how little these external advantages are to be prized, which may fall to the lot of the most worthless. Another reason for dispensing worldly bliss to the wicked is, that indigence would prompt naturally violent and rapacious minds to commit the greatest enormities. Their disease God cures by the medicine of money. Some men will cease to do wrong for fear, lest their wealth be lost

4066

through their crimes. Upon others unmerited happiness is conferred, which at last precipitates them into deserved destruction. To some there is given the power of chastisement, in order both to exercise the virtues of the good and to punish the wicked. For as there is no alliance between good and bad, so neither can the vicious agree together. And how should they? Their vices make them at war with themselves, rending and tearing their consciences, and there is scarce anything they do, but what afterwards they disap-

4051 *oper*—oother  
*done*—don  
4052 *folies*—felonies  
4054 *grete*—gret  
*good[e]*—goode  
4055 *sholde*—sholden  
*þilk*—þilke  
4056 *serue*—seruen  
*whiche*—which  
4057 *dispensiþ*—MS. dispis-

iþ, C. dispensith  
4059 *my3t[e]*—myhte  
4060 *done*—don  
4061 *rychesse*—Rychesses  
4065 *whiche*—which  
4068 MS. wrongly inserts  
*welfulnesse* after *wick-*  
*ednesse*  
4069-71 *oper*—oother  
4073 *good[e]*—goode

4074 *none*—non  
4075 *good[e]*—goode  
4076 *accorden*—acordy  
4078 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
*oft[e]*—ofte  
4079 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
4080 *sholde*—sholden  
*whiche þinge*—which thing  
4081 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*oft[e]*—ofte

prove of. Hence arises a signal miracle brought about by Providence—that evil

[\* fol. 32.] men have often made wicked men good.

For these latter having suffered injuries from the former, have become virtu-

ous, in order that they might not resemble those whom they so detested. It is only the Divine power that can turn evil to good, overruling it for his own purposes.

Nothing occurs by the caprice of chance in the realms of Divine Providence.

Since God is the governor of all things, it is not lawful to man to attempt to comprehend the whole of the Divine economy, or to explain it in words. Let it suffice to know that God orders all things for the best.

And while he retains things created after his own likeness conformably to his goodness, he banishes evil by the cause of destiny out of his empire.

So that those evils which you seem to see are only imaginary.

But you are exhausted and weary with the prolixity of my reasoning, and look for relief from the harmony of my verse.

[faire] miracle so þat shrewes han maked oftyne shrewes to ben good[e] men. for whan þat som shrewes \* seen þat þei suffren wrongfully felonies of oþer shrewes þei wexen eschaufed in to hat[e] of hem þat anoiem hem. *and* retournen to þe fruit of uertue. when þei studien to ben vnlyke to hem þat þei han hated.

4088 ¶ Certys þis only is þe deuyne myzt to þe whiche myzt yueles ben þan good. whan it vseþ þo yueles couenably *and* draweþ out þe effect of any good. as who seiþ þat yuel is good oonly by þe myzt of god. for þe myzt of god ordeyneþ þilk yuel to good. For oon ordre enbrasieþ alle þinges. so þat what wyzt [þat] departieþ fro þe resoun of þe ordre whiche þat is assigned to hym. algates 3it he slideþ in to an oþer ordre. so þat noþing nis leueful to folye in þe realme of þe deuyne purueaunce. as who seiþ no þing nis wiþouten ordinaunce in þe realme of þe deuyne purueaunce. ¶ Syn þat þe ryzt strong[e] god gouernieþ alle þinges in þis worlde for it nis nat leueful to no man to *comprehenden* by witte ne vnfolden by worde alle þe subtil ordinaunces *and* disposiciouns of þe deuyne entent. for oonly it auzt[e]

4102 suffice to han loked þat god hym self makere of alle natures ordeynieþ and dressieþ alle þinges to good. while þat he hastieþ to wiþhalden þe þinges þat he haþ maked in to hys semblaunce. þat is to seyn forto wiþholden þinges in to good. for he hym self is good he chaseþ oute al yuel of þe boundes of hys communalite by þe ordre of necessite destinable. For whiche it folweþ þat yif þou loke þe purueaunce ordeynynge þe þinges þat men wenen ben haboundaunt in erþes. þou ne shalt not seen in no place no þing of yuel. ¶ but I se now þat

4082 [faire]—from C.  
oflyme—omitted  
4083 good[e]—goode  
4085 hat[e]—hate  
anoiem—anoiyeden  
4087 studien—omitted  
vnlyke—vnlyk  
4088-90 good—goode  
4092 þilk—þilke

4093 [þat]—from C.  
4094 þe (2)—þilke  
whiche—which  
4096 realme—Reame  
4099 strong[e]—stronge  
worlde—world  
4100 no—omitted  
witte—wit  
4101 worde alle—word al

4102 auzt[e]—owhte  
4104 good while—goode wyl  
4105 haþ—MS. haþe  
4108 of (1)—fro  
4109 whiche—which  
4111 ben haboundaunt—ben  
outraious / or habownd-  
ant



þou art charged wiþ þe wey3te of þe questiou[n] *and* wery wiþ lengþe of my resoun. *and* þat þou abidest som swetnesse of songe. tak þan þis drauzt *and* whan þou art wel refreshed *and* refet þou shalt ben more stedfast to stye in to heyere questiouns. 4117

Take, then, this draught, with which when refreshed, you may more strongly proceed to higher matters.

## SI UIS CELSI IURA.

Yif þou wolt demen in þi pure þouzt þe ryztes or þe lawes of þe heye þund[ere]re. þat is to seyne of god. loke þou *and* bihold þe heyztes of souereyne heuene. ¶ þere kepen þe stæres by ryztful alliaunce of þinges hir olde pees. þe sonne ymoewed by hys rody fire. ne destourbiþ nat þe colde cercle of þe moone. ¶ Ne þe sterre yclepid þe here. þat enclinþ hys rauyssynge courses abouten þe souereyne heyzt of þe worlde. ne þe same sterre vrsa nis neuer mo wasshen in þe depe westerne see. ne coueitþ nat to dyzen hys flaumbes in þe see of [the] occian. al þouz he see oþer sterres yplounged in to þe see. ¶ And hesperus þe sterre bodiþ *and* telliþ alwey þe late nyztes. And lucifer þe sterre bryngeþ azeyne þe clere day. ¶ And þus makip loue enterchaungeable þe perdurable courses. *and* þus is discordable bataile yput oute of þe contre of þe sterres. þis accordaunce attempreþ by euene-lyke manere[s] þe elementes. þat þe moyste þinges striuen nat wiþ þe drye þinges. but ziuen place by stoundes. and þat þe colde þinges ioynen hem by feiþ to þe hote þinges. *and* þat þe lyzt[e] fyre arist in to heyzte. *and* þe heuy erpes aualen by her wey3tes. ¶ by þise same cause þe floury yere zeldeþ swote smellys in þe fyrste somer sesoun warmynge. *and* þe hote somer dryeþ þe cornes. *and*

[The syxte Metur.]

If thou wouldst explore the laws of the high Thunderer, behold the lofty heavens, where, bound by fixed laws, the stars keep their ancient peace. There the rosy Sun does not invade the moon's colder sphere. Nor doth the Bear stray from his appointed bounds, to quench his light in the western main. Vesper always makes its wonted appearance at eve.

4128

Lucifer ushers in the morn. So mutual love moves all things, and from the starry region banishes all strife. This concord in equal measures tempers the elements, so that the moist atoms war no more with the dry, nor heat with cold contends; but the aspiring flame soars aloft, while down the heavy earth descends. By these same causes the flowing year yields sweet smells in the warm spring-tide; the hot summer ripens the corn. Autumn comes crowned

4115 tak—MS. take, C. tak  
4116 refet—refect  
shalt ben—shal be  
stedfast—stydefast  
4118 þou wolt—þou wys wilt  
4119 þund[ere]re — thon-  
seyne—seyn [derere  
4120 bihold—MS. biholde, C.  
byhold [rody  
4122 rody — MS. redy, C.

4122 fire—Fyr  
4123 cercle—clerke  
4125 courses—cours  
heyzt—heyhte  
4127 westerne—westrene  
dyzen—decyn  
4128 [the]—from C.  
he see—MS. it sewe, C. he  
see  
oþer—oothre

4131 azeyne—ayein  
4133 oute—owt  
4134 euene-lyke manere[s]—  
euenelyk maneres  
4135 striuen—stryuyng  
nat—omitted  
4136 but—omitted  
4138 lyzt[e] fyre arist—lyhte  
fyr arysith  
4140 yere—3er

with plenty, and winter wets the earth with showers.

These changes give life and growth to all that breathe; and at last by death efface whatever has had birth.

[\* fol. 32 b.]  
Meanwhile the

4148

world's Creator, the Source of all, the Lawgiver, the wise Judge, sits above equitably directing all things. Those things which have been set in motion by him are also checked and forced to move in an endless round, lest they go from their source, and become chaotic.

4157

This love is common to all things, and all things tend to good; so, urged by this, they all revert to that First Cause that gave them being.

[The seuende  
prose.]

P. Do you see what follows from our arguments?

B. What is it?

P. That all fortune is good.

B. How can that be?

P. Since all fortune, whether prosperous or adverse, is for the reward of the good or the punishment of

autumpne comeþ aʒeyne heuy of apples. and þe fletyng reyne bydeweþ þe wynter. þis attemperaunce noryssip *and* brynggeþ furþe al þinge þat bredip lyfe in þis worlde. ¶ and þilk same attemperaunce rauyssyng hideþ *and* bynymeþ *and* drencheþ vndir þe last[e] depe alle \*þinges yborn. ¶ Amonges þise þinges siteþ þe heye makere kyng *and* lorde. welle *and* bygynnyng. lawe *and* wise Iuge. to don equite *and* gouernip *and* enclinip þe bridles of þinges. *and* þo þinges þat he stireþ to don by moeuynge he wiþdraweþ *and* arestip *and* affermip þe moeueable or wandryng þinges. ¶ For ʒif þat he ne clepip nat aʒein þe ryzt goynge of þinges. *and* ʒif þat he ne constreyned[e] hem nat eftesones in to roundnesse enclined þe þinges þat ben now continued by stable ordinaunce. þei sholde deperten from hir welle. þat is to sein from hir bygynnyng *and* failen. þat is to sein tournen in to nauzt. ¶ þis is þe commune loue of alle þinges. *and* alle þinges axen to be holden by þe fyn of good. For ellys ne myzten þei nat lasten yif þei ne come nat eftesones aʒeine by loue returned to þe cause þat haþ ʒeuen hem beyng. þat is to seyn to god. 4162

## IAM NE IGITUR UIDES.

Seest þou nat þan what þing folweþ alle þe þinges þat I haue seid. what þing quod I. ¶ Certys quod she outerly þat al fortune is good. and how may þat be quod .I. ¶ Now vndirstand quod she so as [alle fortune wheyther so it be Ioyeful fortune / or aspre] fortune is ʒiuen eiþer by cause of gerdonyng or ellys of exercisyng of goode folk or ellys by cause to punissen.

4142 comeþ aʒeyne — comth  
ayein

4143 reyne—reyn

4144 furþe al þinge—forth  
alle thing

bredip lyfe—berith lyf

4145 worlde—world

þilk—þilke

4146 last[e] depe—laste deth

4147 yborn—MS. yborne, C.

I-born

4148 lorde—lord

4149 wise—wys

4150 stireþ—sterith  
don—gon

4151 þe—omitted

4153 clepip—klepede

4154 constreyned[e] — con-  
streynede

roundnesse — Rownd-  
nesses

4156 sholde—sholden

4158 tournen—torne

of—to

4150 be—ben

4161 eftesones aʒeine — eft  
sones ayein

4162 haþ—MS. haþe

4163 þing—thinge

4165 outerly—al owtrely

al—alle

4166-7 [alle—aspre]—from  
C.

4169 goode—good

or ellys to chastysen shrewes. ¶ þan is alle fortune good. þe whiche fortune is certeyne þat it be eiper ryztful or profitable. ¶ For soþe þis is a ful verray resoun quod I. and yif I considere þe purueaunce and þe destine þat þou tauzttest me a litel here byforne þis sentence is susteyned by stedfast resouns. but yif it like vnto þe lat vs noumbre hem amonges þilk[e] þinges of whiche þou seidest a litel here byforne þat þei ne were nat able to ben ywened to þe poeple. ¶ whi so quod she. for þat þe comune worde of men mysusiþ quod I. þis manere speche of fortune. and sein ofte tymes [þat] þe fortune of som wyzt is wicked. wilt þou þan quod she þat I proche a litel to þe wordes of þe poeple so it seme nat to hem þat I be ouer moche departid as fro þe vsage of man kynde. as þou wolt quod I. ¶ Demest þou nat quod she þat al þing þat profitiþ is good. 3is quod I. certis þilk þing þat exercisiþ or corrigiþ profitiþ. I confesse it wel quod I. þan is it good quod she. whi nat quod I. but þis is þe fortune [quod she] of hem þat eiper ben put in vertue and batailen azeins aspre þinges. or ellys of hem þat eschewen and declinen fro vices and taken þe weye of vertue. ¶ þis ne may nat I denye quod I. ¶ But what seist þou of þe myrye fortune þat is zeuen to good folk in gerdoun deuiniþ ouzt þe poeples þat it is wicked. nay forsoþe quod I. but þei demen as it soþe is þat it is ryzt good. ¶ And what seist þou of þat oþer fortune quod she. þat al þou3 it be aspre and restreiniþ þe shrewes by ryztful tourment. weniþ ouzt þe poeple þat it be good. nay quod I. ¶ But þe poeple demiþ þat it be most wrecched of alle þinges þat may ben þouzt. war now and loke wel quod she lest þat we in folwyng þe opynioun of poeple haue con-

the bad, all fortune is good which is either just or useful. But let us put this opinion among those positions which thou saidst were not commonly believed by the people.

P. Why so?  
B. Because it is a common expression that *the fortune of such a one is bad*.

P. Do you wish me to conform for awhile to the language of the people, lest we should seem to depart too much from the popular mode of expression?

B. As you please.  
P. Is everything profitable that is good?

B. Yes, certainly.  
P. That which exercises or corrects is profitable?

4186

B. It is.  
P. Therefore it is good? B. Yes.  
P. This is the fortune of the virtuous who combat with adversity, or of those who, relinquishing vice, pursue the path of virtue?

B. It is.  
P. The vulgar regard that prosperity which is bestowed as a reward on the good to be beneficial, and they believe those calamities by which the wicked are punished as the most miserable things that can be imagined. But in following the popular opinion, let us be aware of being involved in some new and incredible consequence.

4174 here byforne—her byforne  
4175 stedfast—stydefast  
4176 noumbre—nowmbren  
þilk[e]—thilke  
4177 here byforne—her byforne

4178 ywened—weened  
4179 worde—word  
4180 [þat]—from C.  
4181 wicked—wykkede  
4182 proche—aproche  
4185 al—alle  
4186 þilk—thilke

4188 [quod she]—from C.  
4191 weye—wey  
4193 deuiniþ—demyth  
4194 ouzt—awht  
4195 soþe—soth  
4198 ouzt—awht  
4199 be—is



B. What is that?  
P. We have decided that the fortune of the virtuous or of those growing up in virtue must needs be good—but that the fortune of the wicked must be most wretched.

B. That's true, though none dare acknowledge it.

P. Why so?

The wise man ought not to be cast down, when he has to wage war with Fortune, no more than the valiant man ought to be dismayed on hearing the noise of the

[\* fol. 83.]

battle. The dangers of war enable the one to acquire more glory, and the difficulties of the other aid him to confirm and im-

4217

prove his wisdom. Thus virtue, in its literal acceptation, is a power that, relying on its own strength, overcomes all obstacles. You, who have made so much progress in virtue, are not to be carried away by delights and bodily lusts. You must engage in a fierce conflict with every fortune—with adversity, lest it dismay you—with prosperity, lest it corrupt you. Seize the *golden mean* with all your strength. All below or above this line is a contemptible and a thankless felicity. The choice of fortune lies in your own hands, but remember that even adverse fortune, unless it exercises the

fessed *and* concluded þing þat is vnable to be wened to þe poeple. what is þat quod I. ¶ Certys quod she it folweþ or comeþ of þinges þat ben graunted þat alle fortune what so euer it be. of hem þat eyþer ben in possessioun of vertue. [or in the encre of vertu] or ellys in þe purchasyng of vertue. þat þilke fortune is good. ¶ And þat alle fortune is ryzt wicked to hem þat dwellen in shrewednesse. as who seiþ. *and* þus weneþ nat þe poeple. ¶ þat is soþe quod I. ¶ Al be it so þat noman dar confessen it ne byknowen it. ¶ whi so quod she. For ryzt as no strong man ne semeþ nat to abassen or disdaignen as \*ofte tyme as he hereþ þe noise of þe bataile. ne also it ne semeþ nat to þe wyse man to beren it greuously as oft[e] as he is lad in to þe strif of fortune. for hoþe to þat on man *and* eke to þat oþer þilke difficulte is þe matere to þat oon man of encrese of his glorious renoun. *and* to þat oþer man to conferme hys sapience. þat is to seine þe asprenesse of hys estat. ¶ For þefore is it called uertue. for þat it susteniþ *and* enforceþ by hys strengþes þat it nis nat ouer-comen by aduersites. ¶ Ne certys þou þat art put in þe encrese or in þe heyzt of uertue ne hast nat comen to fleten wiþ delices *and* forto welken in bodyly lust. ¶ þou sowest or plauntest a ful egre bataile in þi corage azeins euery fortune. for þat þe sorweful fortune ne confounde þe nat. ne þat þe myrre fortune ne corruppe þe nat. ¶ Occupy þe mene by stedfast strengþes. for al þat euer is vndir þe mene. or ellys al þat ouer-passeþ þe mene despiseþ welefulnesses. ¶ As who seiþ. it is vicious *and* ne haþ no mede of hys trauaile. ¶ For it is set in þoure hand. as who seiþ it lieþ in þoure power what fortune þow is leuest. þat is to seyne good or uel. ¶ For alle fortune

4204 *comeþ*—comth  
4206 [*or*—*vertu*] from C.  
4208 *wicked*—wykkede  
4210 *soþe*—soth  
4211 *confessen*—confesse  
4212 *no strong*—the stronge  
4213 *abassen*—abayssen

4215 *oft[e]*—ofte  
4219 *seine*—seyn  
4223 *heyzt*—heyhte  
4224 *welken*—wellen  
4226 *confounde*—MS. con-  
founded, C. confownde  
4227 *Occupy*—Ocupye

4223 *stedfast*—stydefast  
4230 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4231 *set*—MS. sette, C. set  
4232 *lieþ*—lith  
4233 *seyne*—seyn

þat semeþ sharpe or aspre yif it ne exercise nat þe good virtues of the  
folk. ne chastisiþ þe wicked folk. it punisseþ. 4235 the good or chastises  
the wicked, is a  
punishment.

## BELLA BIS QUENIS. ET CETERA.

**P**E wrekere attrides ¶ þat is to seyne agamenon þat  
wrouzt[e] and continued[e] þe batailes by ten zere  
recouered[e] and purged[e] in wrekyng by þe destruc-  
cioun of troie þe loste chambres of mariage of hys broþer 4239  
pis is to seyn þat [he] agamenon wan azein Eleine þat  
was Menelaus wif his broþer. In þe mene while þat  
pilke agamenon desired[e] to zeuen sailes to þe grek-  
ysshe nauye and bouzt[e] azein þe wyndes by blode. he  
vncloped[e] hym of pite as fader. and þe sory prest  
ziueþ in sacrificyng þe wreched kuytting of þrote of þe  
douzter. ¶ þat is to sein þat agamenon lete kuytten þe  
þrote of hys douzter by þe prest. to maken alliaunce wiþ 4247  
hys goddes. and for to haue wynde wiþ whiche he  
myzt[e] wende to troie. ¶ Itakus þat is to sein vlixies  
bywept[e] hys felawes ylorn þe whiche felawes þe  
fiers[e] pholifemus ligginge in his grete Caue had[de]  
freten and dreint in hys empty wombe. but napeles  
polifemus wood for his blinde visage zeld to vlixies ioie  
by hys sorowful teres. pis is to seyn þat vlixes smot  
oute þe eye of poliphemus þat stod in hys forhede. for 4255  
whiche vlixes hadde ioie whan he saw poliphemus  
wepyng and blynde. ¶ Hercules is celebrable for hys  
hard[e] trauaile he dawntede þe proude Centauris half  
hors half man. and he rafte þe despoylyng fro þe  
Hercules is  
renowned for his  
many labours, so  
successfully over-  
come. He over-  
threw the proud  
Centauris;

[The seuende  
Metur.]Atrides carried on  
a ten years' war to  
punish the licen-  
tious Paris.With blood  
he purchased  
propitious  
gales for the  
Grecian fleet, by  
casting off all  
fatherly pity, and  
sacrificing his  
daughter  
Iphigenia to the  
vengeance of  
Diana.Ulysses bewailed  
his lost mates,  
devoured by  
Polyphemus,  
but, having de-  
scribed the Cyclop  
of his sight, he  
rejoiced to hear  
the monster's  
roar.Hercules is  
renowned for his  
many labours, so  
successfully over-  
come. He over-  
threw the proud  
Centauris;

4234 sharpe—sharp  
4236 seyne—seyn  
4237 wrouzt[e]—wrowhte  
continued[e]—continuede  
zere—zer  
4238 purged[e]—purgede  
4240 [he]—from C.  
wan—MS. wanne, C. wan  
4242 desired[e]—desirede  
4243 bouzt[e]—bowhte  
blode—blod  
4244 vncloped[e]—vnclothede  
as—of  
4245 kuytting—MS. kny-

tyng, C. kutyng  
4246 lete—let  
kuytten—MS. knydden, C.  
kuttyn  
4248 haue—han  
4249 myzt[e] wende—myhte  
wenden  
4250 bywept[e]—by-wepte  
ylorn—MS. ylorne, C. y-  
lorn  
4251 fiers[e]—feerse  
had[de]—hadde  
4253 zeld—yald  
4254 sorowful—sorwful

4254 smot—MS. smote, C.  
smot  
4255 oute—owt  
stod—MS. stode, C. stood  
forhede—forehed  
4256 saw—say  
4258 hard[e] trauaile—harde  
trauayles  
dawntede—MS. dawnded,  
C. dawntede  
4259 half—MS. hals  
rafte—byrafte  
fro—from

he slew the Nemean lion and wore his skin as a trophy of his victory; he smote the Harpies with his arrows; he carried off the golden apples of the Hesperides, and killed the watchful dragon; he bound Cerberus with a threefold chain; he gave the body of proud Diomedes as food for the tyrant's horses;

he slew the serpent Hydra; he caused Achelous to hide his blushing head within his banks;

he left Antæus dead upon the Lybian shore; he appeased Evander's wrath by killing Cacus;

he slew the Erymanthean boar;

and bore the weight of Atlas upon his shoulders.

These labours justly raised him to the rank of a god.

Go then, ye noble souls, and follow the path of this great example.

cruel lyoun þat is to seyne he slouȝ þe lyoun *and* rafte hym hys skyn. he smot þe brids þat hyȝten arpijs [in þe palude of lynne] wiþ certeyne arwes. he rauyssed[e] applis fro þe wakyng dragoun. *and* hys hand was þe more heuy for þe golde[ne] metal. He drouȝ Cerberus þe hound of helle by hys treble cheyne. he ouer-comer as it is seid hap put an vnmeke lorde fodre to hys cruel hors ¶ þis is to sein. þat hercules slouȝ diomedes *and* made his hors to etyn hym. *and* he hercules slouȝ Idra þe serpent *and* bren[d]e þe venym. *and* achelaus þe flode defouled[e] in his forhede dreint[e] his shamefast visage in his strondes. þis is to sein þat achelaus couþe transfigure

4273 hym self in to dyuerse lykenesse. *and* as he fauȝt wiþ orcules at þe laste he turnid[e] hym in to a bole. *and* hercules brak of oon of hys hornes. *and* achelaus for shame hidde hym in hys ryuer. ¶ And [he] hercules \*cast[e] adoun Antheus þe geaunt in þe strondes of libye. *and* kacus apaised[e] þe wrappes of euander. þis is to sein þat hercules slouȝ þe Monstre kacus *and* apaised[e] wiþ þat deef þe wrappe of euander. ¶ And þe bristled[e] boor marked[e] wiþ scomes þe sholdres of hercules. þe whiche sholdres þe heye cercle of heuene sholde þreste. *and* þe laste of his labours was þat he sustened[e] þe heuene vpon his nekke vnbowed. *and* he deserued[e] eftsones þe heuene to ben þe pris of his laste trauayle ¶ Goþ now þan ȝe stronge men þere as þe heye weye of þe grete ensample ledeþ ȝou. ¶ O nice

4288 men whi nake ȝe ȝoure bakkes. as who seiþ. ¶ O ȝe

4260 *seyne*—seyne  
4261 *smot*—MS. smote, C. smot  
4262 [in—lynne]—from C.  
4263 *rauysed[e]*—rauysshede  
4266 *seid*—MS. seide, C. sayd  
*hap*—MS. hape  
4267 *lorde*—lord  
4269 *etyn*—freten  
4270 *bren[d]e*—brende

4270 *flode defouled[e]*—flood defowlede  
4271 *forhede dreint[e]*—forhed dreynte  
4273 *lykenesse*—lyknæsses  
4274 *turnid[e]*—tornede  
4275 *brak*—MS. brake, C. brak  
*hys*—hise  
4276 [he]—from C.  
4278-80 *apaised[e]*—apaysede

4281 *bristled[e]*—brystclede marked[e]—markede  
4282 *cercle*—clorke  
4283 *þreste*—thriste  
4285 *deserued[e]*—deseruede  
4286 *Goþ*—MS. Gope þere—ther  
4287 *weye*—wey  
4288 *nake*—MS. make, C. nake



slowe *and* delicat men whi fley 3e aduersites. *and* ne  
fyzten nat azeins hem by vertue to wynnen þe mede of  
þe heuene. for þe erþe ouer-comen zeueþ þe sterres.  
¶ þis is to seyne þat whan þat erþely lust is ouer-comen.  
a man is makend worþi to þe heuene.

O ye slothful  
ones, wherefore  
do ye basely fly!

4291

He who conquers  
earth doth gain  
the heavens.

## EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS.

## INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

## DIXERAT ORACIONISQUE CURSUM.

She hadde seid *and* tourned[e] þe cours of hir resoun to  
somme oþer þinges to ben tretid *and* to ben ysped.  
þan seide I. Certys ryztful is þin amonestyng *and* ful  
digne by auctore. but þat þou seidest som tyme þat  
þe questioun of þe deuyne purueaunce is enlaced wip  
many oþer questiouns. I vndir-stonde wel *and* proue it  
by þe same þinge. but I axe yif þat þou wenest þat hap  
be any þing in any weys. *and* if þou wenest þat hap be  
any [thing] what is it. þan quod she. I haste me to  
zelden *and* assoilen þe to þe dette of my byheste *and*  
to shewen *and* openen þe wey by whiche wey þou maist  
come azein to þi contre. ¶ but al be it so þat þe þinges  
whiche þat þou axest ben ryzt profitable to knowe.  
zitte ben þei diuers somewhat fro þe pape of my purpos.  
And it is to douten þat þou ne be makend weery by  
mysweys so þat þou ne mayst nat suffise to mesuren þe  
ryzt weye. ¶ Ne doute þe þer-of no þing quod I. for  
forto-knowen pilke þinges to-gidre in þe whiche þinges  
I delite me gretly. þat shal ben to me in stede of reste.  
Syn it nis nat to douten of þe þinges folwyng whan  
euery side of þi disputisoun shal be stedfast to me by  
vndoutous feiþ. þan seide she. þat manere wol I don

[The fyrste prose.]

When Philo-  
sophy had thus  
spoken, and was  
about to discuss  
other matters I  
interrupted her.  
B. Thy exhorta-  
tion is just and  
worthy of thy  
authority, but  
thou saidst that  
the question  
of the Divine  
Superintendence  
or Providence is  
involved with  
many others—  
and this I believe.

I am desirous,  
however, of know-  
ing whether  
there be such a  
thing as *Chance*,  
and what thou  
thinkest it is.  
P. I haste to  
fulfil my promise  
and to show the  
road to your own  
country. But al-  
though these  
things you ques-  
tion me about are  
profitable to  
know, yet they  
lead us a little out  
of our way. And  
by straying from  
the path you may  
be too fatigued to  
return to the  
right road.

B. Don't be  
afraid of that, for  
it will refresh me  
as much as rest  
to know these  
things in which I  
am delightfully

4289 *slowe* — MS. slou3, C.  
slowe  
*fley* — flee  
4292 *seyne* — seyn  
4294 *seid* — MS. seide, C. seyð  
þe — by  
4297 *som tyme* — whilom  
4298 *þe* (2) — thy

4300 *þinge* — thing  
4302 [*thing*] — from C.  
4303 *zelden* — yilden  
*assoilen* — MS. assailen, C.  
assoylen  
*byheste* — byhest  
4304-6 *whiche* — which  
4306 *ben* — MS. bene

4307 *pape* — paath  
4312 *stede* — styde  
4314 *disputisoun* — disputa-  
cioun  
*be* — han ben  
*stedfast* — stydefast

interested.  
P. I will then comply with thy requests. If we define Chance to be an event produced by an unintelligent motion, and not by a chain or connection of causes, I should then affirm that Chance is nothing and an empty sound. What room is there for folly and disorder where all things are restrained by order, through the ordinance of God? For it is a great truth that nothing can spring out of nothing. Now, if anything arises without the operation of a cause, it proceeds from nothing. But if this is impossible, then there can be no

4331

such a thing as Chance, as we have defined it.  
B. Is there nothing, then, that may be called Chance or Fortune? Is there nothing (hid from the vulgar) to which these words may be applied?  
P. Aristotle defines this matter with much precision and  
[\* fol. 34.]  
probability.  
B. How?  
P. So often as a man does anything for the sake of any other thing, and another thing than what he intended to do is produced by other causes, that thing so produced is called Chance. As if a man trench the ground for tillage

be. *and* bygan to speken ryzt þus ¶ Certys quod she yif any wyzt diffynisse hap in þis manere. þat is to seyn. þat hap is bytidynge y-brouzt forþe by foelyshe moeuynge. *and* by no knyttyng of causes. ¶ I con-ferme þat hap nis ryzt nauzt in no wise. and I deme al outerly þat hap nis ne dwelliþ but a voys. ¶ As who seiþ. but an ydel worde wiþ outen any significacioun of þing summittid to þat vois. for what place myzt[e] ben left or dwellynge to folie *and* to disordinaunce. syn þat god lediþ *and* streyniþ alle þinges by ordre. ¶ For þis sentence is verray *and* soþe þat no þinge ne haþ his beyng of nouzt. to [the] whiche sentence none of þise olde folk ne wiþseide neuere al be it so þat þei ne vndirstoden ne moeueden it nauzt by god prince *and* gynner of wirkyng. but þei casten as a manere founde-ment of subgit material. þat is to seyn of [the] nature of alle resoun. *and* 3if þat ony þinge is woxen or comen of no causes. þan shal it seme þat þilke þinge is comen or woxen of nouzt. but yif þis ne may nat ben don. þan is it nat possible þat þere haþ ben any swiche þing as I haue diffynissid a litel here byforne. ¶ How shal it þan ben quod I. nis þer þan no þing þat by ryzt may be cleped eyþer *happe* or ellis auenture of fortune. or is þer ouzt al \*be it so þat it is hidd fro þe poeple to whiche þise wordes ben couenable. Myn aristotul quod she. in þe book of his phisik diffynisseþ þis þing by short resoun and neyze to þe soþe. ¶ In whiche manere quod I. ¶ As ofte quod she as men don any þing for grace of any oþer þing. *and* an oþer þinge þan þilke þing þat men ententen to doon bytideþ by som[e] causes it is ycleped *happe*. ¶ Ryzt as a man dalf þe erþe by

4317 *seyn*—seyng  
4318 *forþe*—forth  
4322 *worde*—word  
4323 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
4324 *left*—lefte  
4325 *streyniþ*—constreynyth  
4326 *soþe*—soth  
no *þinge*—nothing  
*hap*—MS. *habe*

4327 [*the*]—from C.  
4330 *gynner*—bygynnere  
4331 [*the*]—from C.  
4332 *3if*—MS. 3it, C. yif  
þinge—thing  
4335 *þat*—ben—þat hap be  
*hap*—MS. *habe*  
*swiche*—swych  
4338 *happe*—hap

4339 *hidd*—MS. hidde, C.  
hidd  
4340 *whiche*—which  
4342 *neyze*—nehg  
*whiche*—which  
4343 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
4344 *þinge*—thing  
4345 *som[e]*—some  
4346 *happe*—hap

cause of tylienge of þe felde. *and* fond þere a gobet of golde by-doluen. þan wenen folk þat it is fallen by fortunous bytydyng. but for soþe it nis nat for nauzt for it haþ hys propre causes of whiche causes þe cours vnforseyn and vnwar semip to han maked happe. ¶ For yif þe tilier in þe erþe ne delue nat in þe felde. and yif þe hider of þe golde ne hadde hidd þe golde in þilke place. þe golde ne had[de] nat ben founde. þise ben þan þe causes of þe abreggyng of fortune hap. þe whiche abreggyng of fortune hap comeþ of causes encountryng *and* flowyng to-gidre to hem selfe. *and* nat by þe entencioun of þe doer. ¶ For neiþer þe hider of þe gold. ne þe deluer of þe felde ne vndirstanden nat þat þe golde sholde han be founde. but as I seide. it bytidde *and* ran to-gidre þat he dalf þere as þat oþer hadde hidd þe golde. Now may I þus diffinissen happe. ¶ Happe is an vnwar bytydyng of causes assembled in þinges þat ben don for som oþer þinge. but þilke ordre procedyng by an vneschewable byndyng to-gidre. whiche þat descendþ fro þe wel of purueaunce þat ordeineþ alle þinges in hire places *and* in hire tymes makeþ þat þe causes rennen *and* assemblen to-gidre. 4368

and find gold, then this is believed to happen by chance, although it is not so. For if the tiller had not ploughed the field, and if the hider of the gold had not concealed it in that spot, the gold had not been found. These, then, are the causes of a fortuitous acquisition which proceeds from a conflux of encountering causes, and not from the intention of the doer. For neither the hider of the gold nor the husbandman intended or understood that the gold should be found. But it happened by the concurrence of these two causes that the one did dig where the other had hidden the money. Chance, then, is an unexpected event, by a concurrence of causes, following an action designed for a particular purpose. This concurrence of causes proceeds from that order which flows from the fountain of Providence and disposes all things as to place and time.

RUPIS ACHEMENIE.

Tigris [*and*] eufrates resoluen *and* spryngen of a welle in þe kragges of þe roche of þe contre of achemenye þere as þe fleenge [batayle] ficchþ hire dartes retournid in þe brestes of hem þat folwen hem. ¶ And sone afre þe same ryueres tigris *and* eufrates vniogyng *and* de-

[The fyrste Metur.] Where the flying Parthian doth pierce his pursuers with his shafts, there from the Achemenian heights flow the Tigris and Euphrates, but soon

- 4347 of (1)—to  
fond — MS. fonde, C.  
founde
- 4348 golde—gold  
fallen—byfalle
- 4349 for (2)—of
- 4350 hap—MS. hape  
hys—hise
- 4351 happe—hap
- 4352 tilier—tylyere
- delue—dolue
- 4353 hider—hydere
- golde—gold
- hidd—MS. hidde

- 4353-4 golde—gold
- 4354 had[de]—hadde
- 4355 fortune—fortuit  
whiche—which
- 4356 fortune—fortuit  
comeþ—comth
- 4357 flowyng—MS. folwyng,  
C. flowyng  
selfe—self
- 4358 doer—doere
- hider—hidere
- 4359 deluer—deluere
- felde—feeld [en]
- vndirstanden—vndirstod-

- 4360 golde—gold
- 4361 hidd—MS. hidde, C.  
hyd
- 4362 happe (both)—hap
- 4365 whiche—which
- 4366 descendþ—MS. defend-  
ep, C. descendith  
wel—welle
- 4369 [*and*]—from C.  
a—oo
- 4371 [batayle]—from C.
- 4373 þe—tho



their streams divide and flow into separate channels. But should they unite again, in the impetuous stream, boats, ships, and trees would be all intermingled, whirled about; and blind Chance seems to direct the current's course. But the sloping earth, the laws of fluids, govern these things. So though Chance seems to wander unrestrained, it is nevertheless curbed and restrained by Divine Providence.

[The .2<sup>d</sup>e. prose.]

*B.* Is there any *free-will* in this chain of cohering causes? Or doth the *chain of destiny* constrain the motions of the human mind?  
*P.* There is a freedom of the will possessed by every rational being. A rational being has judgment to judge of and discern everything. Of himself he knows what he is to avoid or to desire. He seeks what he judges desirable, and he shuns what he deems should be avoided. A rational being possesses, then, the liberty of choosing and rejecting. This liberty is not equal in all beings. In heavenly substances, as spirits, &c., judgment is clear, and the will is incorruptible, and has a ready and efficacious power of doing things which are desired.

[\* fol. 34 b.]

parten hire watres. and yif þei comen to-gidre *and* ben assembled *and* clepid to-gidre in to o cours. þan moten þilke þinges fletyn to-gidre whiche þat þe water of þe entrechaungyng flode bryngeþ þe shippes *and* þe stokkes araced wiþ þe flood moten assemble. *and* þe watres ymedlyd wrappiþ or implieþ many fortunel happes or maneres. þe whiche wandryng happes naþeles þilke enclinyng lowenes of þe erþe. *and* þe flowynge ordre of þe slidyng water gouerniþ. ¶ Ryzt so fortune þat semeþ as [þat] it fletip wiþ slaked or vngouerned[e] bridles. It suffriþ bridles þat is to seyn to ben gouerned *and* passeþ by þilke lawe. þat is to sein by þe deuyne ordinaunce.

4386

ANIMADUERTO INQUAM.

þis vndirstonde I wel quod I. *and* accorde wel þat it is ryzt as þou seist. but I axe yif þer be any liberte or fre wil in þis ordre of causes þat cliuen þus to-gidre in hem self. ¶ or ellys I wolde witen yif þat þe destinal cheine constreiniþ þe moeueyng of þe corages of men. yis quod she þer is liberte of fre wille. ne þer ne was neuer no nature of resoun þat it ne hadde liberte of fre wille. ¶ For every þing þat may naturely vsen resoun. it haþ doom by whiche it discerniþ *and* demip every þing. ¶ þan knoweþ it by it self þinges þat ben to fleen. *and* þinges þat ben to desiren. *and* þilk þing þat any wyzt demeþ to ben desired þat axeþ or desireþ he *and* fleep [þilke] þing þat he trouep ben to fleen. ¶ wherfore in alle þinges þat resoun is. in hem also is libertee of willyng *and* of nillynge. ¶ But I ne ordeyne nat. as who seip. I ne graunte nat þat þis libertee be euene like in alle þinges. forwhi in þe souereyns deuynes substaunces. þat is to \*seyn in spiritz ¶ Iugement is

4374 *to-gidre*—to-gyderes  
4376 *whiche*—which  
4377 *flode*—flood  
4378 *assemble*—assemblyn  
4380 *enclinyng*—declynyng  
4381 *lowenes*—lownesse

4383 [þat]—from C.  
*vngouerned[e]*—vngouern-  
ede  
4385 *þe*—þilke  
4389 *or*—of  
4390 *hem*—hym

4392 *yis*—MS. yif. C. yis  
4392-94 *wille*—wil  
4395 *whiche*—which  
4397 *þilk*—þilke  
4399 [þilke]—from C.

more clere *and* wil nat be corumped. *and* haþ myzt redy to speden þinges þat ben desired. ¶ But þe soules of men moten nedes ben more free whan þei loken hem in þe speculacioun or lokinge of þe deuyne þouzt. *and* lasse free whan þei sliden in to þe bodies. *and* zit lasse free whan þei ben gadred to-gidre *and* comprehendid in erþely membris. but þe last[e] seruage is whan þat þei ben zeuen to vices. *and* han yfalle fro þe possessioun of hire propre resoun ¶ For after þat þei han cast aweye hir eyen fro þe lyzt of þe souereyn soþfastnesse to lowe þinges *and* dirke ¶ Anon þei dirken by þe cloude of ignoraunce *and* ben troubled by felonous talentz. to þe whiche talentz whan þei approchen *and* assenten. þei hepen *and* encreesen þe seruage whiche þei han ioigned to hem self. *and* in þis manere þei ben caitifs fro hire propre libertee. þe whiche þinges napeles þe lokinge of þe deuyne purueaunce seeþ þat alle þinges byholdeþ *and* seeþ fro eterne. *and* ordeyneþ hem eueryche in her merites. as þei ben predestinat. *and* it is seid in grek. þat alle þinges he seeþ *and* alle þinges he hereþ. 4424

The souls of men must needs be more free when employed in the contemplation of the Divine Mind, and less so when they enter into a body, and still less free when enclosed and confined in earthly members; but the most extreme servitude is when they are given over to vice and wholly fallen from their proper reason. For at once they are enveloped by the cloud of ignorance and are troubled by pernicious desires, by yielding to which they aid and increase that slavery which they brought upon themselves, and thus even under the liberty proper to them, they remain captives. Yet the eye of Providence, beholding all things from eternity, sees all this and disposes according to their merit all things as they are predestinated. He, as Homer says of the sun, sees and hears all things.

## PURO CLARUM LUMINE.

**H**omer wiþ þe hony mouþe. þat is to seyn. homer wiþ þe swete dities synged þat þe sonne is cleer by pure lyzt. napeles zit ne may it nat by þe inferme lyzt of hys bemes breken or percen þe inwarde entrailes of þe erþe. or ellys of þe see. ¶ so ne seeþ nat god makere of þe grete worlde to hym þat lokeþ alle þinges from on heye ne wiþstandiþ nat no þinges by heynesses of erþe. ne þe nyzt ne wiþstondeþ nat to hym by þe blake cloudes. ¶ þilke god seeþ in o strook of þouzt alle þinges þat ben or weren or schullen come. ¶ *and* þilke

[The 24<sup>th</sup>. Metur.]

The sweet-tongued Homer sings of the sun's pure light. Yet the sun's beams cannot pierce into the inner bowels of the earth, nor into the depths of the sea. But God, the world's maker, beholding from on high, has his vision impeded neither by earth nor cloud. At a glance he sees all events, present, past, and future.

4405 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4411 *last[e]*—laste  
4412 *fro*—from  
4415 *cloude*—cloudes  
4418 *whiche*—which

4423 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
4425 *mouþe*—Mowth  
4428 *percen*—MS. perten,  
C. percen  
*inwarde*—inward

4430 *worlde*—world  
*on heye*—an hegh  
4431 *nat*—omitted  
4434 *schullen come*—shollen  
comyn

God, then, that alone sees all things, may indeed be called the true Sun.

god for he lokeþ *and* seeþ alle þinges al oon. þou maist seyn þat he is þe verray sonne.

4436

[The .3<sup>d</sup>e. prose.]

B. I am distracted by a more difficult doubt than ever. God's foreknowledge seems to me inconsistent with man's free-will. For if God foresees all things, and cannot be deceived, then that which Providence hath foreseen must needs happen. If God from eternity doth foreknow not only the works, but the designs and wills of men, there can be no liberty of will—nor can there be any other action or will than that which a Divine and infallible Providence hath foreseen. For if things fall out

4451

contrary to such foreseeing, and are wrested another way, the prescience of God in regard to futurity would not be sure and unerring—it would be nothing but an uncertain opinion of them; but I take it to be impious and unlawful to believe this of God. Nor do I approve of the reasoning made use of by some. For they say that a thing is not necessarily to happen because God hath foreseen it, but rather because it is to happen it cannot be hid from the Divine Providence.

TAMEN EGO EN INQUAM.

þ An seide I now am I confounded by a more harde doute þan I was. what doute is þat *quod* she. ¶ For certys I coniecte now by whiche þinges þou art troubled. It semeþ *quod* I to repugnyn *and* to contrarien gretly þat god knoweþ byforn alle þinges. *and* þat þer is any fredom of liberte. for yif so be þat god lokeþ alle þinges byforn. ne god ne may nat ben desseiuid in no manere. þan mot it nedes ben þat alle þinges bytyden þe whiche þat þe purueaunce of god haþ sein byforn to comen. ¶ For whiche yif þat god knoweþ by-forn nat oonly þe werkes of men. but also hir conseils *and* hir willes. þan ne shal þer be no liberte of arbitre. ne certys þer ne may ben noon oþer dede ne no wille but þilke whiche þe deuyne purueaunce þat ne may nat ben desseiued haþ feled byforn ¶ For yif þat þei myzten wryþen away in oþer manere þan þei ben purueyed. þan ne sholde þer ben no stedfast prescience of þinge to comen but raþer an vncerteyn oppinioun. þe whiche þinge to trowen on god I deme it felonie *and* vnleueful. ¶ Ne I ne proeue nat þilke same resoun. as who seiþ I ne allowe nat. or I ne preise nat þilke same resoun by whiche þat som men wenen þat þei mowen assoilen *and* vnknytten þe knot of þis questioun. ¶ For certys þei seyn þat þing nis nat to come for þat þe purueaunce of god haþ seyn it byforne. þat is to comen but raþer þe contrarie. ¶ And þat is þis þat for þat þe þing is to comen þat þerfore ne may it nat ben hyd fro þe purueaunce of god.

4435 *al oon*—alone  
4437 *harde*—hard  
4445 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4446 *whiche*—which  
4450 *wille*—wil  
*whiche*—which þat

4451 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4453 *stedfast*—stydefast  
4454-55 *þinge*—thing  
4455 *on*—of  
4456 *þilke*—þilke  
4458 *whiche*—which

4459 *knot*—knotte  
4461 *come*—comyn  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
4464 *hyd*—MS. hydde, C.  
hidde



\**and* in þis manere þis necessite slydiþ aȝein in to þe contrarie *partie*. ne it ne byhoueþ [nat] nedes þat þinges bytiden þat ben ypurueid. [but it by-houeth nedes / þat things þat ben to comyn ben yporueyid] but as it were ytrauailed. as who seiþ. þat þilke answe<sup>r</sup> proceediþ ryȝt as þouȝ men trauailden or weren bysy to enqueren þe whiche þing is cause of whiche þinges. as wheþer þe prescience is cause of þe necessite of þinges to comen. or ellys þat þe necessite of þinges to comen is cause of þe purueaunce. ¶ But I ne enforce me nat now to shewen it þat þe bytydyng of þinges y-wist byforn is necessarie. how so or in what manere þat þe ordre of causes haþ it self. al þouȝ þat it ne seme nat þat þe prescience brynge in necessite of bytydyng of þinges to comen. ¶ For certys yif þat any wyȝt sitteþ it byhoueþ by necessite þat þe oppinioun be soþe of hym þat coniectiþ þat he sitteþ. and aȝeinward. al so is it of þe contrarie. yif þe oppinioun be soþe of any wyȝt for þat he sitteþ it byhoueþ by necessite þat he sitte ¶ þan is here necessite in þat oon *and* in þat oþer. for in þat oon is necessite of sittyng. *and* certys in þat oþer is necessite of soþe but þerfore ne sitteþ nat a wyȝt for þat þe oppinioun of sittyng is soþe. but þe oppinioun is raþer soþe for þat a wyȝt sitteþ by-forn. and þus al þouȝ þat þe cause of soþe comeþ of [þe] syttyng. and nat of þe trewe oppinioun. Al gates zitte is per comune necessite in þat oon *and* in þat oþer. ¶ þus sheweþ it þat I may make semblable skills of þe purueaunce of god *and* of þinges to come. ¶ For al þouȝ for þat þat þinges ben to comen. þerfore ben þei purueid. nat certys for þei ben purueid. þerfore ne bytide þei nat. zit naþeles byhoueþ it by necessite þat eiþer þe þinges to comen ben ypurueied of god. or ellys þat þe þinges þat ben

[\* fol. 35.]  
Now by this reason necessity appears to change sides. For it is not necessary that the things which are foreseen should happen, but it is necessary that the things which are to befall should be foreseen. As if the question was, which was the cause of the other—*prescience* the cause of the necessity of future events, or the *necessity* the cause of the prescience of future events? But I will prove that, however the order of causes may stand, the event of things foreseen is necessary, although prescience doth not seem to impose a necessity upon future

4481  
things to fall out. For if a man sit—the belief in the sitting is true; and, on the other hand, if the opinion is true of his sitting, he must needs sit. In both cases there is a necessity—in the latter that the person sits—in the former, that the opinion concerning the other is true. But the man does not sit because the opinion of his sitting is true, but the opinion is true because the action of his being seated was antecedent in time. So that although the cause of truth arises from the sitting, there is a common necessity in both. Thus may we reason concerning Providence and future events.

4466 [nat]—from C.  
4467-8 [but—yporueyid]—  
from C.  
4471 þinges—thing  
4477 haþ—MS. haþe  
4480-82 soþe—soth

4486 soþe—sooth  
4487 soþe—soth  
4488 soþe—sooth  
4489 soþe comeþ — sooth  
comth  
[þe]—from C.

4490 comune—MS. comme,  
C. comune  
4493 come—comyn  
4494 to—omitted  
4494-95 purueid—MS. pur-  
ueide, C. purueyid

For allowing things are foreseen because they are to happen, and that they do not befall because they are foreseen, it is necessary that future events should be foreseen of God, or if foreseen that they should happen; and this alone is sufficient to destroy all idea of *free-will*. But it is preposterous to make the happening of temporal things the cause of eternal prescience, which we do in imagining that God foresees future events because they are to happen. And, moreover, when I know that anything exists, it is necessary for my belief that it should be. So

4513

also when I know that an event shall come to pass, it must needs happen. The event, therefore, of a thing foreseen must befall. Lastly, if a person judge a thing to be different to what it is—this is not knowledge, but a false opinion of it, and far from the true knowledge. If, therefore, a thing be so to happen that the event of it is neither necessary nor certain, how can any one foresee what is to happen? For as pure knowledge has no element in it of falsehood, so what is comprehended by true knowledge cannot be otherwise than as comprehended. Hence it is that true

purueied of god bitiden [.s.] by necessite. ¶ And þis þing oonly suffiseþ I-nouȝ to distroien þe fredome of oure arbitre. þat is to seyn of oure fre wille ¶ But now [certes] sheweþ it wel how fer fro þe soþe and how vp so down is þis þing þat we seyn þat þe bytydinge of temporel þinges is þe cause of þe eterne prescience. ¶ But forto wenen þat god purueiþ [the] þinges to comen. for þei ben to comen. what oþer þing is it but forto wene þat þilke þinges þat bitiden som tyme ben causes of þilke souereyne purueaunce þat is in god. ¶ And her-to I adde ȝitte þis þing þat ryȝt as whan þat I woot þat o þing is it byhoueþ by necessite þat þilke self þing be. and eke þat whan I haue knowe þat any þinge shal bitiden so byhoueþ it by necessite þat þilk[e] same þing bytide. so folweþ it þan þat þe bytydyng of þe þing Iwist by-forn ne may nat ben eschewed. ¶ And at þe last[e] yif þat any wyȝt wene a þing tō ben oþer weyes þan it is. it nys nat oonly vnscience. but it is deceiuable oppinioun ful diuerse and fer fro þe soþe of science. ¶ wher-fore yif any þing be so to comen so þat þe bytydyng of it ne be nat certeyne ne necessarie. ¶ who may weten [byforn] þat þilke þing is to come. ¶ For ryȝt as science ne may nat be medelyd wiþ falsnesse. as who seiþ þat yif I woot a þing. it ne may nat be fals þat I ne woot it. ¶ Ryȝt so þilk þing þat is conceyued by science ne may [nat] ben noon oþer weyes þan [as] it is conceiued. For þat is þe cause whi þat science wantiþ lesyng. as who seiþ. whi þat wityng ne receyueþ nat lesyng of þat it woot. ¶ For it byhoueþ by necessite þat euery þinge [be] ryȝt as science comprehendþ it to be. what shal I þan sein. ¶ In whiche manere knoweþ god byforn þe þinges to comen.

4498 [.s.]—from C.  
4499 *fredome*—freedom  
4500 *wille*—wil  
4501 [certes]—from C.  
4504 *purueiþ*—MS. *purueiþe*  
[the]—from C.  
4506 *bitiden*—bytydden  
*som tyme*—whilom

4509 o—a  
self—selue  
4510 *þinge*—thing  
4511 *þilk[e]*—thilke  
4513 *þinge*—thing  
4514 *last[e]*—laste  
4515 *nys*—is  
4518 *it*—hit

4519 [byforn]—from C.  
4522 *fals*—false  
4523 [nat]—from C.  
ben—MS. by, C. ben  
4524 þan [as] it is—MS. þan  
it is be  
4527 [be]—from C.  
4529 *whiche*—which

¶ yif þei ne be nat certeyne. ¶ For yif þat he deme þat þei ben to comen vneschewably. *and* so may be þat it is possible þat þei ne shullen \*nat comen. god is desseiued. but nat only to trowen þat god is desseiued. but for to speke it wiþ mouþe it is a felonous syñe. ¶ But yif þat god woot þat ryzt so as þinges ben to comen. so shulle þei comen. so þat he wit[e] egaly. as who seiþ indifferently þat þinges mowen ben don or ellys nat don. what is þilke prescience þat ne comprehendþ no certeyne þinge ne stable. or ellys what difference is þer bytwixe þe prescience. *and* þilke iape-worþi dyuynge of Tiresie þe diuinour þat seiðe. ¶ Al þat I seie *quod* he eyþer it shal be. or ellys it ne shal nat be. Or ellis how moche is worþe þe diuyn prescience more þan þe oppinioun of mankynde yif so be þat it demeþ þe þinges vncerteyne as men don. of þe whiche domes of men þe bytydyng nis nat certeyne. ¶ But yif so be þat noon vncerteyne þinge may ben in hym þat is ryzt certeyne welle of alle þinges. þan is þe bytydyng certeyne of þilke þinges whiche he haþ wist byforn fermely to comen. For whiche it folweþ þat þe fredom of þe conсеils *and* of þe werkes of mankynde nis non syn þat þe þouzt of god seeþ alle þinges *with* outen *error* of falsnesse byndeþ *and* constreiniþ hem to a bitidyng by necessite. *and* yif [this] þing be on-is grauntid *and* receyued. þat is to seyn. þat þer nis no fre wille. þan sheweþ it wel how gret distruccioun *and* how grete damages þer folwen of þinges of mankynde. ¶ For in ydel ben þer þan *purposed* *and* byhyzt medes of goode folk. *and* peynes to badde folk. syn þat no moeuynge of free corage uoluntarie ne haþ nat deserued hem. þat is to seyn neiþer mede nor peyne. ¶ And it sholde seme þan þat þilke þinge is alþer worste whiche

knowledge cannot; err, because everything must precisely be what true knowledge [\* fol. 35 b.] perceives it to be. What follows, then?

4534

How does God foreknow these uncertain contingencies?

For if he thinks that a thing will inevitably happen, which possibly may not, he is deceived—but this is sheer blasphemy.

4540

But if God discerns that just as things are to come they shall come; if he knows that they may or may not come, what sort of prescience is this, which comprehends nothing certain, nothing invariable? Or how does divine prescience differ from human opinion, if He hath an uncertain judgment of things, whereof the events are uncertain and unfixed?

4551

But if there can be no uncertainty in his knowledge, who is the source of all certainty; the event of all things which he foreknows must be fixed and inevitable.

Whence it follows that men have no freedom in their designs and actions; because the Divine Mind, endowed with an infallible foresight, constrains and binds them to a certain event.

4562

4534 *mouþe*—Mowth  
4536 *shulle*—shullyn  
*wit[e]*—wite  
4538 *don*—MS. done, C. y-  
doon  
4543 *moche*—mochel

4543 *worþe*—worth  
4549 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4550 *whiche*—which  
4551 *mankynde*—man-kynd  
4554 [*this*]—from C.  
4555 *grauntid*—ygraunted

4558 *medes of*—Meedes to  
4560 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4562 *alþer worste whiche*—  
alderworst which



Rewards and punishments now deemed just and equitable, will be considered most unjust, when, it is allowed, that mankind are not prompted by any will of their own, to either virtue or vice, but in all their actions are impelled by a fatal necessity.

4570 Nor would there be such things as virtue or vice, but such a medley of the one and the other as would be productive of the greatest confusion. And from this it will follow—that since all order comes of Divine Providence, and that there is no freedom of the human will, that also our vices must be referred to the author of all good—which is a most impious opinion. Then is it useless to hope for anything from God, or to pray to him. For why should men do either, when all they can desire is irreversibly predestined? Hope and prayer being thus ineffectual, all intercourse is cut off between God and man.

4588 By reverent and humble supplication we earn divine grace, a most inestimable favour, and are able to associate with the Deity, and to unite ourselves to the inaccessible light.

þat is nowe demed. for alþer moste iuste and moste ryztful. þat is to seyn þat shrewes ben punyssed. or ellys þat good[e] folk ben ygerdoned. þe whiche folk syn þat þe propre wille [ne] sent hem nat to þat oon ne to þat oþer. þat is to seyn. neþer to good[e] ne to harme. but constreineþ hem certeyne necessite of þinges to comen. ¶ þanne ne shollen þer neuer ben ne neuer weren vice ne vertue. but it sholde raþer ben confusioun of alle desertes medlid wiþoute discreсион. ¶ And zitte þer folweþ an oþer inconuenient of þe whiche þer ne may ben þouzt ne more felonous ne more wikke. and þat is þis þat so as þe ordre of þinges is yledd and comeþ of þe purueaunce of god. ne þat no þing nis leueful to þe conseils of mankynde. as who seiþ þat men han no power to done no þing. ne wilne no þing. þan folweþ it þat oure vices ben referred to þe mak[er]e of alle good. as who seiþ þan folweþ it. þat god auzt[e] han þe blame of oure vices. syn he constreiniþ by necessite to don vices. þan nis þer no resoun to han hopen in god. ne forto preien to god. ¶ For what sholde any wyzt hopen to god. or whi sholde he preien to god. syn þat þe ordenaunce of destine whiche þat ne may nat ben enclined. knytteþ and streiniþ alle þinges þat men may desiren. ¶ þan sholde þere be don away þilke oonly alliaunce bytwixen god and men. þat is to seien to hopen and to preien. but by þe preis of ryztfulnesse and of veray mekenesse we deserue þe gerdoun of þe deuyne grace whiche þat is inestimable. þat is to sein þat it is so grete þat it ne may nat ben ful ypreised. and þis is oonly þe manere. þat is to seyen hope and prayeres. for whiche it semeþ þat [men] mowen speken

4563 *nowe*—MS. *newe*, C. *now*  
*alþer moste iuste*—alder  
 moost iust  
*moste*—most  
 4565-67 *good[e]*—goode  
 4566 *wille*—wil  
 [ne]—from C.  
 4571 *wiþoute*—with-owten  
 4573 *þouzt*—thoght

4574 *yledd*—MS. *yledde*, C.  
 yled  
 4575 *comeþ*—comth  
 4577 *done*—doon  
 4578 *mak[er]e*—makere  
 4579 *auzt[e]*—owhte  
 4584 *whiche*—which  
 4588 *preis*—prys  
*ryztfulnesse*—Rihtwesse-

nesse  
 4589 *deserue*—desseruyne  
 4590 *deuyne*—MS. *deuyne*s,  
 C. *dyuyne*  
 4590-93 *whiche*—which  
 4591 *grete*—gret  
 4593 [men]—from C.  
*speken*—speke

wiþ god. *and* by resoun of supplicacioun ben conioigned to pilk clernesse þat nis nat approached no raper or þat men byseken it *and* emprenten it. And yif men ne wene [nat] þat [hope] ne preiers ne han no strengþes. by þe necessite of þinges to comen y-resceiued. what þing is þer þan by whiche we mowen be conioygned *and* clyuen to pilke souereyne prince of þinges. ¶ For whiche it byhoueþ by necessite þat þe lynage of mankynde as \*þou songe a litel here byforne ben departed *and* vniointed from hys welle *and* faylen of hys bygynnyng. þat is to seien god. 4604

If men believe that hope and prayer have no power because of the necessity of future events, by what other way can we be united, and hold fast to the sovereign Lord of all things?

4599

Wherefore mankind must be discovered and disunited from the source of its existence, and shrink from its beginning.

QUE NAM DISCORS

What discordable cause haþ to-rent *and* vniointed þe byndyng or þe alliaunce of þinges. þat is to seyne þe coniunccioun of god *and* of man. ¶ whiche god haþ establissed so grete bataile bitwixen þise two, soþfast or verray þinges. þat is to sein bytwixen þe purueaunce of god *and* fre wille. þat þei ben synguler *and* diuided. ne þat þei ne wolen nat ben medeled ne coupled to-gidre. but þer nis no discorde to [tho] verray þinges. but þei cleuen certeyne al wey to hem self. but þe þouzt of man confounded *and* ouerþrowen by þe dirke membris of þe body ne may nat by fir of his dirk[ed] lokyng. þat is to seyn by þe vigour of hys insyzt while þe soule is in þe body knowen þe þinne subtil knyntynges of þinges. ¶ But wherfore eschaufiþ it so by so grete loue to fynden pilke note[s] of soþey-couered. (*glosa*) þat is to sein wherfore eschaufiþ þe þouzt of man by so grete desir to knowen pilke notificaciouns þat ben yhidd vndir þe couertours of soþe. woot it ouzt pilke þinges

[The .3<sup>de</sup>. Metur.] Say what discordant cause looseth the bonds of things?

4607

What power doth make these two great truths (i. e. Providence and Free-will) contend, which when separate are plain and clear, but united appear dark and perplexed?

4613

The mind of man encumbered by the earthly body, can never, with her cloudy sight, discover the subtle and close bonds of things.

4617

But why does man burn with ardour to learn the hidden notes of truth? Why gropes he for he knows not what? None seek to know what is known.

4595 *pilk*—thilke  
4596 *emprenten*—impretent  
4597 [nat]—from C.  
[hope]—from C.  
4601 *whiche*—which  
4602 *byforne*—by-forn  
4605 *haþ*—MS. hape  
4606 *seyne*—seyn  
4607 *whiche*—which

4608 *haþ*—MS. hape  
*grete*—gret  
*soþfast*—soothfast  
4610 *wille*—wil  
4612 *discorde*—discord  
[tho]—from C.  
4613 *cleuen*—clyuen  
4615 *dirk[ed]*—derkyd  
4616 *while*—whil

4617 *knowen*—knowe  
4619-21 *grete*—gret  
*note[s]*—notes  
4619 *soþe*—soth  
4621 *yhidd*—MS. yhidde, C.  
Ihyd  
4622 *soþe*—sooth  
*þinges*—thing

If he knows  
them not, what  
does he so blindly  
seek ?

Who wishes for  
things he hath  
never known ?  
Or if he seek,  
where shall he  
find them ?  
Or if he find, how  
shall he be sure  
that he has found  
what he sought  
for ? The pure  
soul that sees the  
divine thought,  
knows all the  
secret chains of  
things.

Yet, though now  
hidden in its  
fleshly members,  
it hath some re-  
membrance of its  
pure state—it re-  
tains the sums of  
things, but has  
lost their partic-  
ulars. He who  
seeks truth is not  
in either circum-  
stance (i. e. seek-  
ing for what he  
knows or knows  
not), he knoweth  
not all things,  
nor hath he  
wholly forgotten  
all.

But he ponders  
on what he  
knows, that he  
may add those  
things that he  
hath forgotten to  
those that he  
retains.

4625 [Glosa]—from C.  
4630 *þinge*—thing  
*whiche*—which  
4631 *woot*—not  
*nat*—nawht  
4632 *couþe*—kowde  
4634 [*þat*]—from C.  
*where*—wher

þat it anguissous desireþ to knowe. as who seiþ nay.  
¶ For no man ne trauaileþ forto witen þinges þat he woot.

4625 *and þerfore þe texte seiþ þus.* ¶ [*Glosa*] *Si enim anima ignorat istas subtiles connexiones. responde. unde est quod desiderat scire cum nil ignotum possit desiderare.*

¶ But who traua[i]leþ to wyten þinges y-knowe. and yif þat he ne knoweþ hem nat. what sekiþ þilke blynde þouzt. what is he þat desireþ any þinge of whiche he woot ryzt nat. as who seiþ who so desiriþ any þing nedis som what he knoweþ of it. or ellys he ne couþe

nat desire it. or who may folwen þinges þat ne ben nat ywist ¶ and þouzt [*þat*] he seke þo þinges where shal he fynden hem. what wyzt þat is al vnknowynge *and* ignoraunt may knowe þe forme þat is yfounde. ¶ But whan þe soule byholdeþ *and* seeþ þe heye þouzt. þat is to seyn god. þan knoweþ it to-gidre þe somme *and* þe singularites. þat is to seyn þe principles *and* eueryche by hym self. ¶ But now while þe soule is hidd in þe cloude *and* in þe derknesse of þe membris of þe body. it ne haþ nat al forzetten it selfe. but it wiþholdeþ þe

4643 *somme of þinges and lesiþ þe singularites. þan who so þat sekeþ soþenesse. he nis in neiþer nouþir habit. for he not nat alle ne he ne haþ nat alle forzetten.* ¶ But zitte hym remembriþ þe somme of þinges þat he wiþholdeþ *and* axeþ counseil *and* tretip depelyche þinges ysein byforne. [*Glosa*] þat is to sein þe grete somme in hys mynde. [*textus*] so þat he mowe adden þe parties þat he haþ forzetten. to þilke þat he haþ wiþholden.

4635 *what*—MS. þat, C. what  
*vnknowynge*—vnkunynge  
4639 *eueryche*—euerych  
4640 *while*—whil  
*þe*—MS. þe þe  
*hidd*—MS. hidde, C. hidde  
4641 *derknesse*—derkenesse  
4642 *haþ*—MS. haþe

*selfe*—self  
4644 *nouþir habit*—nother  
habite  
4645 *alle (both)*—al  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
4648 [*Glosa*]—from C.  
4649 [*textus*]—from C.  
4650 *haþ (both)*—MS. haþe



TAMEN ILLA UETUS INQUIT HEC EST.

**P**anne seide she. þis is quod she þe olde questioun of þe purueance of god. and marcus tulus whan he deuided[e] þe deuinaciouns. þat is to sein in hys booke þat he wroot of deuinaciouns. he moeued[e] gretly þis questioun. and þou þi self hast souzt it mochel and outerly and long[e]. but zit ne haþ it nat ben determined ne yspedd fermely and diligently of any of yow. ¶ And þe cause of þis derkenesse and [of this] difficulte is for þat þe moeuyng of þe resoun of mankynde ne may nat moeuen to. þat is to sein applien or ioynen to þe simplicité of þe deuyné prescience. ¶ þe whiche symplicité of þe deuyné prescience zif þat men [myhten thinken it in any manere / þat is to seyn / þat yif men] myzte pinken and comprehendén þe þinges as god seþ hem. þan ne sholde þer dwellen outerly no doute. þe whiche resoun and cause of difficulte I shal assaie at þe laste to shewen and to speden. ¶ whan I haue \*firste [yspendyd / and] answered to þo resouns by whiche þou art ymoeued. ¶ For I axe whi þou wenest þat þilk[e] resouns of hem þat assoilen þis questioun ne ben nat spedeful ynouz ne sufficient þe whiche solucioun or þe whiche resoun for þat it demip þat þe prescience nis nat cause of necessite to þinges to comen. þan ne wenep it nat þat fredom of wille be distourbed or ylett by prescience. for ne drawest þou nat argumentes from ellys where of þe necessite of þinges to comen. As who seip any oþer wey þan þus. but þat þilke þinge[s] þat þe prescience woot byforn [ne] mowen nat vnbitide. þat is to seyn þat þei moten bitide. ¶ But þan yif þat prescience ne putteþ no necessite to þinges to comen. as þou þi self

[The 4<sup>th</sup> prose.]  
P. This is the old objection against Providence, so ably handled by Cicero in his *Book of Divination*; and you yourself have anxiously dis-  
4655

cussed it. But neither of you have offered a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. The cause of this mystery is that the human understanding cannot conceive the simplicity of the divine prescience, for if it were possible to comprehend this, every difficulty would at once disappear. I shall, therefore, try to explain and solve this difficult  
4665

question. I ask, then, why you do not approve the [\* fol. 36 b.] reasoning of such as think—that Prescience does not obstruct the liberty of the will, because it is not the necessitating cause of future events? Do you draw an argument of the necessity of future events, from any other topic than this,—that those things which are foreknown must  
4675

of necessity happen? If divine prescience imposes no necessity upon future things, must not the issue of things be voluntary, and man's will free and unconstrained?

4653 *deuided[e]*—deuynede booke—book  
4654 *moeued[e]*—moeuede  
4655 *souzt*—I-sowht  
4656 *long[e]*—longe  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
4657 *yspedd*—MS. yspedde, C. Isped  
*fermely*—MS. feruently,

C. fermely  
4658 *derkenesse*—dirknesse [of this]—from C.  
4662-3 [*myhten* — men] — from C.  
4663 *myzte*—myhten  
4667 *firste*—fyrst  
4668 [*yspendyd and*]—from C.

4668 *þo*—the  
*whiche*—which  
4669 *art*—MS. arte  
*þilk[e]*—þilke  
4671 *spedeful*—spedful  
4672 *whiche*—which  
4674 *wille*—wyl  
4677 *þinge[s]*—thinges

For argument sake let us suppose there is no prescience, would, then, the events which proceed from free-will alone be under the power of necessity?

*E. No.*  
*P.* Let us, then, admit Prescience, but that it imposes no necessity on what is to happen; the freedom of the will would still remain entire and absolute. But although Prescience, you may say, is not the necessary cause of future events, yet it is a sign that they shall necessarily happen, and hence it follows that, although there

4695

were no prescience, future events would still be an inevitable necessity. For the sign of a thing is not really the thing itself, but only points out what the individual is. Wherefore, it must be first proved that everything happens by necessity before we can conclude that prescience is a sign of that necessity. For if there be no necessity, prescience cannot be the sign of that which has no existence. The assertion that nothing happens but by necessity, must be proved by arguments drawn from causes connected and agreeing with this necessity, and not from signs or foreign causes.

hast confessed it *and* byknown a litel herbyforne. ¶ what cause [or what] is it. as who seiþ þere may no cause be. by whiche þat þe endes (exitus) uoluntarie of þinges myzten be constreyned to certeyne bitydyng. ¶ For by grace of possessioun. so þat þou mowe þe better vndirstonde þis þat folweþ. ¶ I pose (impossibile) þat þer ne be no prescience. þan axe I quod she in as moche as appertenþ to þat. sholde þan þinges þat comen of frewille ben constreined to bytiden by necessite. *Boicius.* nay quod I. þan azeinward quod she. I suppose þat þere be prescience. but þat ne putteþ no necessite to þinges. þan trowe I þat þilk self fredom of wille shal dwellen al hool *and* absolut *and* vnbounen. but þou wolt sein þat al be it so þat prescience nis nat cause of þe necessite of bitidyng to þinges to comen. ¶ Al gates zitte it is a signe þat þe þinges ben to bytiden by necessite. by þis manere þan al þouz þe prescience ne hadde neuer yben. zit algate or at þe lest[e] wey. it is certeyne þing þat þe endys *and* þe bitydynges of þinges to comen sholde ben necessarie. ¶ For euery sygne sheweþ *and* signifieþ oonly what þe þing is ¶ but it ne makþ nat þe þing þat it signifieþ. ¶ For whiche it byhoueþ firste to shewen þat no þing ne bitidþ [þat it ne bytydith] by necessite. so þat it may apere þat þe prescience is signe of þis necessite ¶ or ellys yif þere nere no necessite. certys þilke prescience ne myzt[e] nat ben signe of þinge þat nis nat. ¶ But certys it is nowe certeyne þat þe preue of þis sustenþ by stedfast resoun ne shal nat ben ladd ne proued by signes ne by argumentys ytaken fro wiþ oute. but by causes couenable *and* necessarie. ¶ But þou mayst sein how may it be þat þe þinges ne bitiden nat

4683 *whiche*—which  
4685 *better*—betere  
4688 *moche*—mochel  
4689 *frewille*—free wyl  
4691 *þat ne*—þat is ne  
4692 *þat*—MS. þan  
þilk self—þilke selue

4693 *wille*—wil  
4699 *lest[e]*—leeste  
4700 *sholde*—sholden  
4703 *whiche*—which  
firste—fyrst  
4704 [þat — bytydith] —  
from C.

4707 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
þinge—þing  
4708 *nowe*—now  
4709 *sustenþ*—ysustenyd  
stedfast—stydefast  
ladd—MS. ladde, C. lad

pat ben ypurueyed to comen. but certys ryzt as we trowen pat þo þinges whiche pat þe purueaunce woot by-forn to comen. ne ben nat to bitiden. but [pat] ne sholde we nat demen. but raþer al þouȝ [pat] þei schal bitiden. ȝit ne haue þei no necessite of hire kynde to bitiden. and þis maist þou lyztly aperceyuen by þis pat I shal seyn. but we seen many þinges whan þei ben don by-forn oure eyen ryzt as men seen þe karter worken in þe tournynge and in attempryng or in adressyng of hys kartes or chariottes. ¶ and by þis manere as who seip mayst þou vnderstonde of alle manere oþir werkemen. ¶ Is þere þanne any necessite as who seip in oure lokynge [pat] constreineþ or compelliþ any of þilke þinges to ben don so. b. nay quod I ¶ For in ydel and in veyne were alle þe effect of crafte yif pat alle þinges weren moeued by constreynynge. pat is to seyn by constreynynge of oure eyen or of oure syzt. P. þise þingus þan quod she pat whan men don hem ne han non necessite pat men don hem. eke þo same þinges first or þei be don. þei ben to comen wiþ out necessite. for whi þer ben somme þinges to bytide of whiche þe endys and þe bitidynges of hem ben absolut \*and quit of alle necessite. for certys I ne trowe nat pat any man woldeseyn þis. pat þo þinges pat men don now pat þei ne weren to bitiden. first or þei were ydon ¶ and þilk same þinges al þouȝ pat men hadden ywyst hem by-forn. ȝitte þei han fre bitidynges. for ryzt as science of þinges present ne bryngeþ in no necessite to þinges [pat men doon // Ryht so the prescience of thinges to comen ne bryngeth in no necessite to thinges] to bytiden but þou mayst seyn pat of þilke same it is ydouted. as wheþer pat of þilke þinges pat ne han non endes and

We see many things when they are done before our eyes; such as a charioteer driving his chariot, and other things of like nature.

Now, is there any necessity which compels these things to be done? B. No. For if all things were moved by compulsion—the efforts of art would be vain and fruitless.

P. The things, then, which are done are under no necessity that they should be done; then first before they were done, they were under no necessity of coming to pass; wherefore some things happen, the event of which is unconstrained by necessity.

These things therefore, although fore-known, have free events: for as the knowledge

4731 of present things imposes no necessity upon things which are now done, so

[\* fol. 37.] neither does the foreknowledge of futurities necessitate the things which are to come. But you may doubt whether there can be any certain prescience of things, of which the event is not necessitated: for here there seems to be an evident contradiction. If things are fore-known, you may contend they must necessarily happen; and if their event is not necessary,

4714 *whiche*—which

4715 [pat]—from C.

*sholde*—sholden4716 *demen*—MS. denyen

[pat]—from C.

4717 *necessite*—MS. necessari-4721 *hys*—hise

4725 [pat]—from C.

4727 *veyne*—veyn*alle*—al*crafte*—craft4729 *þise*—MS. þise þise, C.4732 *wiþ out*—with-owte4733 *bytide*—bytyden4733 *whiche*—which4737 *were*—weeren [I-doon*ydon* — MS. ydone, C.*þilk*—þilke4741-2 [pat — *thinges*] —

from C.

4744 *endes*—issues



they cannot be foreseen, because true knowledge can comprehend nothing but what is absolutely certain. And if things uncertain in their events are foreseen as certain, this knowledge is nothing more than a false opinion. For it is very remote from true knowledge to judge of things otherwise than they really are. The cause of this error is that men imagine that their knowledge is wholly derived from the nature of the things known, whereas it is quite the reverse. Things are not known from their inherent properties, but by the faculties of the observer.

4761

The roundness of a body affects the sight in one way, and the touch in another. The eye, from afar, darts its rays upon the object, and by beholding it comprehends its form. But the object is not distinguished by the touch unless the hand comes in contact with it and feels it all round. Man himself is surveyed in divers ways—by the senses, by the imagination, by reason, and by the Intelligence (of the Deity). The senses take note of his material figure—the imagination considers the form alone, exclusive of the matter.

4746 *seme*—semyn  
*discorde*—discorden

4749 *pat*—yif  
4753-5 [*and*—*self*]*—*from C.

4757 *hap*—MS. *habe*  
4760 *alle*—al

bytidynges necessaryes yif þer-of may ben any pre-science ¶ For certys þei seme to discorde. for þou wenest þat yif þat þinges ben yseyn byforn þat necessite folweþ hem. and yif (*et putas*) necessite faileþ hem þei ne myzten nat ben wist byforn. and þat no þinge ne may ben comprehendid by science but certeyne. and yif þo þinges þat ne han no certeyne bytidynges ben ypurueied as certeyn. it sholde ben dirkenesse of oppinioun nat soþefastnesse of science [*and þou weenyst þat it be diuerse fro the hoolnesse of science / þat any man sholde deme a thing to ben oother weys thanne it is it self*]. and þe cause of þis errour is. þat of alle þe þinges þat euery wyzt hap yknowe. þei wenen þat þo þinges ben y-knowe al onoly by þe strengþe and by þe nature of þe þinges þat ben ywyst or yknowe. and it is al þe contrarie. for alle þat euere is yknowe. it is raper comprehendid and yknowen nat after his strengþe and hys nature. but after þe faculte þat is to seyn þe power and [the] nature of hem þat knowen. and for þat þis shal mowe shewen by a short ensample þe same roundenes of a body .O. oþer weyes þe syzt of þe eye knoweþ it. and oþer weyes þe touching. þe lokinge by castyng of his bemes waiteþ and seeþ fro afer alle þe body to-gider wiþ oute mouyng of it self. but þe touchinge cliuiþ and conioigneþ to þe rounde body (*orbi*) and moueþ abouten þe environyng. and comprehendip by parties þe roundnesse. ¶ and þe man hym self oþer weies wyt byholdip hym. and oþerweyes ymaginacioun and oþer weyes resoun. and oþer weyes intelligence. ¶ For þe wit comprehendip fro wiþ outen furþe þe figure of þe body of þe man. þat is establised in þe matere subiect. But þe ymaginacioun [comprehendith only the figure with owte the matere /

4763 *mowe*—mowen  
4764 *roundenes* — Rownd-nesse

4765 *syzt*—silte  
4767 *alle*—al

4769 *abouten*—abowte

4770 *roundnesse* — Rownd-

nesse

4774 *fro wiþ outen furþe*—with owte forth

4770-7 [*comprehendith* — *ymaginacioun*]*—*from C.

Resoun surmounteth ymaginacioun] and comprehendep by an vniuersel lokinge þe *commune* spece (*speciem*) þat is in þe singular peces. ¶ But þe eye of intelligence is heyzer for it *sourmountep* þe enviroynge of þe vniuersite and lookeþ ouer þat by pure subtilite of þouzt. þilk same symple forme of man þat is perdurably in þe deuyne þouzt. in whiche þis auzt[e] gretely to ben considered þat þe heyest strengþe to comprehenden þinges embraceþ and conteyneþ þe lower[e] strengþe [but the lower strengthe ne arysith nat in no manere to heyere strengthe]. for wit ne may no þinge comprehende oute of matere. ne þe ymagynacioun ne lokeþ nat þe vniuerseles speces. ne resoun ne takeþ nat þe symple forme. so as intelligence takeþ it. but þe intelligence þat lokeþ al abouen whan it haþ comprehendid þe forme it knoweþ and demeþ alle þe þinges þat ben vndir þat forme. but she knoweþ hem vndir þilke manere in þe whiche it comprehendip þilke same symple forme þat ne may neuer be knowen to non of þat oper. þat is to seyn to non of þo þre forseide strengþes of þe soule. for it knoweþ þe vniuersite of resoun and þe figure of þe ymaginacioun. and þe sensible material conseed. and þou wenest þat it be diuerse fro þe hoolnesse of science. þat any man sholde deme a þing to ben operweyes þan it is it self and þe cause of þis errour etc'. *vt supra*. by wit. ne it ne vseþ nat nor of resoun ne of ymaginacioun ne of wit wiþ oute forþe but it byholdeþ alle þinges so as I shal seye. by a strok of þouzt formely wiþ oute discours or collacioun ¶ Certys resoun whan it lokeþ any þing vniuersel it ne vseþ nat of ymaginacioun nor of wit and algates 3it [it] comprehendip þe þinges ymaginable and sensible. for resoun is she þat \*diffinisep þe vniuersel

Reason transcends the Imaginations, and examining existences in general discovers the particular species, but the eye of Intelligence soars still higher; for, going beyond the bounds of what is general, it surveys the simple forms themselves, by its own pure and subtle thought: in which this is chiefly to be considered, that the higher power of perception embraces the lower; but the inferior cannot attain to the energy of the superior: for the senses cannot go beyond the perception of matter; the imagination cannot comprehend existences in general, nor can the reason conceive the simple form. But the Intelligence looking down (as from 4794

above) and having conceived the form, discerns all things that are below it, and comprehends what does not fall within the reach of the other faculties of the mind. Without the aid of those faculties Intelligence comprehends things *formally* (i. e. by beholding their simple forms) by one effort of mind. Reason, without the aid of Imagination and Sense, in considering things in general, comprehends all imaginable and sensible things. For instance, reason defines her general conceptions thus:— [*\* fol. 37 b.*]

4777 *comprehendep* — MS. comprehendynge  
4778 *an*—omitted  
4780 *heyzer*—heyere  
4783 *whiche*—which  
*auzt[e]*—owhte  
4784 *heyest*—heyiste

4785 *lower[e]*—lowers  
4785-7 [*but* — *strengthe*]—  
from C.  
4787 *wit*—withe  
*oute*—owt  
4791 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4793 *whiche*—which

4795-6 *non*—none  
4796 *strengþes*—thinges  
4798-4801 *and þou*—*vt supra*—omitted  
4805 *collacioun*—MS. callacioun, C. collacioun  
4806 *wit*—withe

Man is a rational two-footed animal, which, though it be a general idea, yet every one knows that man thus defined is perceived both by the imagination and the senses, notwithstanding that in this instance reason does not make use of imagination or the senses, but of her own rational conception. The imagination also, although it derives its power of seeing and forming figures from the senses, yet in the absence and without the use of the senses it considers and comprehends all sensible things by its own imaginative power. Do not you see that

4824

men attain to the knowledge of things more by their own faculties, than by the inherent property of things?

[The 4<sup>th</sup> Metur.] Nor is it unreasonable that it should be so—for since every judgment is the act of the person judging; every one must needs do his own work by the help of his own faculties, and not by the aid of foreign power. Fallacious and obscure was the lore of the Stoics, who taught that images of things obvious to the senses were imprinted on the mind by external objects, and that the soul is at first like a mirror or a clean parchment, free from figures and letters.

of hir conseite ryzt þus. ¶ Man is a resonable t[w]o-footid beest. and how so þat þis knowynge [is] vniuersel. 3it nys þer no wyzt þat ne woot wel. þat a man is [a thing] ymaginable *and* sensible ¶ and þis same considereþ wel resoun. but þat nis nat by ymaginacioun. nor by witte. but it lokip it by [a] resonable concepcioun. ¶ Also ymaginacioun al be it so. þat it takeþ of wit þe bygynyngus to seen *and* to formen þe figures. algates al þou3 þat wit ne ware not present. 3it it envirounip *and* comprehendip alle þinges sensible. nat by resoun sensible of demynge. but by resoun ymaginatif. ¶ sest þou nat þan þat alle þe þinges in knowynge vsen more of hir faculte or of hir power. þan þei don of [the] faculte or of power of þinges þat ben yknowen. ne þat nis no wronge. for so as euery iugement is þe dede or þe doynge of hym þat demep. It byhouep þat euery wyzt performe þe werke *and* hys entencioun nat of forein power: but of hys propre power.

## QUONDAM PORTICUS ATTULIT.

þE porche þat is to sein a gate of þe toune of athenis þer as philosophres hadde hir congregacioun to dispoiten. *and* þilke porche brouzt[e] somtyme olde men ful derke in hire sentences. þat is to sein philosophers þat hyztenstoiciens. þat wenden þat ymages [*and*] sensibilites þat is to sein sensible ymaginaciouns. or ellys ymaginacioun of sensible þinges weren inprentid in to soules fro bodies wiþ oute forþe. ¶ As who seiþ þat þilke stoiciens wenden þat þe soule hadde ben naked of it self. as a mirour or a clene parchemyn. so þat alle fygures mosten [fyrst] comen fro þinges fro wiþ oute in to soules. *and* ben inprentid in to soules. *Textus.* Ryzt as we ben wont some tyme by a swift poyntel to ficchen *lettres* emprentid in þe smopenesse or in þe plainesse of

4810 [is]—from C.

4813 *witte*—wit4821 *don*—MS. done, C. doon

[the]—from C.

4822 *yknowen*—Iknowe4822 *no wronge*—nat wrong4824 *werke*—werk4825 *forein*—foreyno4827 *hadde*—hadden*dispoiten*—desputen4828 *brouzt[e]*—browlto4830 [*and*]—from C.4837 *inprentid*—aprentyd4838 *some tyme*—soutytyme*swift*—swyfte



þe table of wex. or in parchemyn þat ne haþ no figure  
[ne] note in it. *Glosa.* But now arguiþ boece azeins þat  
oppinioun and seiþ þus. but yif þe þriuyng soule no  
vnplitiþ no þing. þat is to sein ne doþ no þing by hys  
propre moeuynge. but suffriþ and lieþ subgit to þe  
figures and to þe notes of bodyes wiþ oute forþe. and  
zeldeþ ymages ydel and veyne in þe manere of a  
mirour. whennes þriueþ þan or whennes comeþ þan  
þilke knowyng in oure soule. þat discerniþ and by-  
holdeþ alle þinges. and whennes is þilke strengþe þat  
byholdeþ þe syngulere þinges. or whennes is þe strengþe  
þat dyuydeþ þinges yknowe. and þilke strengþe þat  
gadereþ to-gidre þe þinges deuided. and þe strengþe þat  
cheseþ hys entrechaunged wey. for som tyme it heueþ  
vp þe heued. þat is to sein þat it heueþ vp þe enten-  
cioun to ryzt heye þinges. and som tyme it discendiþ in  
to ryzt lowe þinges. and whan it retourniþ in to hym  
self. it repreuiþ and destroieþ þe false þinges by þe  
trewe þinges. ¶ Certys þis strengþe is cause more  
efficient and mochel more myzty to seen and to knowe  
þinges. þan þilke cause þat suffriþ and resceyueþ þe  
notes and þe figures inpressed in manere of matere al-  
gates þe passioun þat is to seyn þe suffraunce or þe wit  
in þe quik[e] body goþ byforne excitynge and moeu-  
yng þe strengþes of þe þouzte. ryzt so as whan þat  
clerenesse smyteþ þe eyen and moeuiþ hem to seen. or  
ryzt so as voys or sounne hurtliþ to þe eres and com-  
moeuiþ hem to herkne. þan is þe strengþe of þe þouzt  
ymoeuid and excitid and clepeþ furþe þe semblable  
moeuyngeþ þe spesces þat it halt wiþ inne it self. and  
addiþ þo spesces to þe notes and to þe þinges wiþ out  
forþe. and medeleþ þe ymages of þinges wiþ out forþe  
to þe forme[s] yhid wiþ inne hym self. 4872

But if the mind is passive in receiving the impressions of outward objects, whence proceeds the knowledge by which the mind comprehends all things?

4845

Whence its force to conceive individual existences, to separate those things when known, to unite divided things, and to choose and change its path, soaring to the highest and descending to the lowest things—and returning to itself, to confute false things by the true?

4854

This cause is more efficacious and powerful to see and to know things, than that cause which receives the characters impressed like servile matter.

4860

Yet the sense in the living body excites and moves the mental powers; as when the light striking the eyes causes them to see, or as the voice rushing into the ear excites hearing.

4866

Then is the force of thought excited; it calls forth the images within itself, and adds to them the outward forms, blending external images with the counterparts concealed within.

4840 *hab*—MS. *habe*  
4843 *vnplitiþ*—*vnpleyteth*  
*doþ*—MS. *doþe*  
4845 *þe*—*tho*  
4863 *quik[e]*—*qwyke*

4863 *goþ*—MS. *goþe*  
4864 *þouzte*—*thoght*  
4865 *clerenesse*—*cleer nesse*  
4866 *sounne*—*sounn*  
4868 *furþe*—*forth*

4870 *out*—*owte*  
4871 *out forþe*—*owte forth*  
4872 *forme[s]*—*formes*  
*yhid*—*I-üdde*

## QUOD SI IN CORPORIBUS SENCIENDIS.

[\* fol. 88.]

\*QUESTIO.

[The 5<sup>th</sup> prose.]

Although there are in objects certain qualities which strike externally upon the senses, and put their instruments in motion; although the passive impression upon the body precedes the action of the mind, and although the former rouses the latter to action, yet if in the perception of bodily things, the soul is not by the impression of external things made to know these things, but by its own power judgeth of these bodily impres-

4885

sions, how much more shall those pure spiritual beings (as God or angels) discern things by an act of their understanding alone, without the aid of impressions from external objects? For this reason, then, there are several sorts of knowing distributed among various beings. For sense (or sensation) destitute of all other knowledge is allotted to those creatures that have no motion, as shell-fish. But imagination is given to such brutes capable of motion, and having in some degree the power of desiring or refusing. Reason, however, is the attribute of man alone, as Intelligence is that of God.

4902

But what [yif] þat in bodies to ben feelid þat is to sein in þe takynge of knoweleching of bodyly þinges. and al be it so þat þe qualites of bodies þat ben obiect fro wiþ oute forþe moeuen *and* entalenten þe instrumentes of þe wittes. and al be it so þat þe passioun of þe body þat is to seyn þe witte [or the] suffraunce [goth to-forne the strengthe of the workynge corage / the which passioun or suffraunce] clepiþ furþe þe dede of þe þouzt in hym self. *and* moeueþ *and* exiteþ in þis mene while þe formes þat resten wiþ in forþe. and yif þat in sensible bodies as I haue seid oure corage nis nat ytauzt or enprentid by passioun to knowe þise þinges. but demip *and* knoweþ of hys owen strengþe þe passioun or suffraunce subiect to þe body. Moche more þan þoo þinges þat ben absolut *and* quit fram alle talentz or affeccions of bodies. as god or hys aungels ne folwen nat in discernynge þinges obiect fro wiþ oute forþe. but þei accomplissen *and* speden þe dede of hir þouzt by þis resoun. ¶ þan þere comen many manere knowynges to dyuerse *and* differyng substaunces. for þe wit of þe body þe whiche witte is naked *and* despoyled of alle oþer knowynges. pilke witte comeþ to bestes þat ne mowen nat moeuen hem self here ne þere. as oystres *and* muscles *and* oþer swiche shelle fysshe of þe see. þat cliuen *and* ben norissed to roches. but þe ymaginacioun comeþ to remuable bestes þat semen to han talent to fleen or to desiren any þinge. but resoun is al only to þe lynage of mankynde ryzt as intelligence is oonly þe deuyne nature. of whiche it folweþ þat pilke knowyng is more worþe þan [th]is[e] oþer. syn it knoweþ by hys

4973 [yif]—from C.  
4378 [or the]—from C.  
suffraunce — MS. suffi-  
saunce, C. suffraunce  
4979-80 [goth—suffraunce]  
—from C.

4883 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
4887 *quit*—quite  
4888 *hys*—hise  
4889 *discernynge* — MS. dis-  
cryyng, C. discernynge  
from—fro

4893-94 *witte*—wit  
4895 *mowen*—mowe  
*here ne þere*—her *and* ther  
4901 *whiche*—which  
4902 [th]is[e] oþer — thise  
oother

propre nature nat only hys subiect. as who seip it ne knoweþ nat al oonly þat apperteiniþ proprely to hys knowynge. but it knoweþ þe subgitz of alle oþer knowynges. but how shal it þan be yif þat wit *and* ymaginacioun stryuen azeins resonyng *and* sein þat of pilke vniuersel þinges. þat resoun weneþ to seen þat it nis ryzt nauzt. for wit *and* ymaginacioun seyn þat þat. þat is sensible or ymaginable it ne may nat ben vniuersel. þan is eiper þe iugement of resoun [soth]. ne þat þer nis no þinge sensible. or ellys for þat resoun woot wel þat many þinges ben subiect to wit *and* to ymaginacioun. þan is þe consepcioun of resoun veyn *and* fals whiche þat lookeþ *and* comprehendip. þat þat is sensible *and* synguler as uniuersale. and zif þat resoun wolde answeren azein to þise two þat is to sein to wit *and* to ymaginacioun. *and* sein þat soþely she hir self. þat is to seyn þat resoun lokeþ *and* comprehendip by resoun of vniuersalite. boþe þat þat is sensible *and* þat þat is ymaginable. *and* þat pilke two þat is to seyn wit *and* ymaginacioun ne mowen nat strecchen ne enhaunsen hem self to knowynge of vniuersalite for þat þe knowyng of hem ne may exceden nor sourmounten þe bodyly figure[s] ¶ Certys of þe knowyng of þinges men auzten raþer zeue credence to þe more stedfast *and* to þe more perfit iugement. In þis manere stryuyng þan we þat han strengþe of resonyng *and* of ymaginacyng *and* of wit. þat is to seyn by resoun *and* by ymaginacioun *and* by wit. [*and*] we sholde raþer preise þe cause of resoun. as who seip þan þe cause of wit or ymaginacioun. semblable þinge is it þat þe resoun of mankynde ne weneþ nat þat þe deuyne intelligence byholdeþ or knoweþ þinges to comen. but ryzt as þe resoun of mankynde knoweþ hem. for þou arguist *and* seist þus. þat

Hence His (i. e. God's) knowledge exceeds all other, comprehending both what belongs to His own nature, and what is comprehended by all inferior creatures. But how shall it be then, if sense and imagination oppose reason, affirming that the general idea of things, which reason thinks it so perfectly sees, is nothing? For what falls under the cognisance of the senses and imagination cannot be general. But if reason should answer to this—that in her idea of what is general she comprehends whatever is sensible and imaginable; but as to the senses and imagination, they cannot attain to the knowledge of what is general, since their know-  
4921

ledge is confined to material figures; and therefore in all real knowledge of things we must give the greatest credit to that faculty which has a more steadfast and perfect judgment of things. In a controversy of this kind ought not we, who possess faculties of reason, &c., to side with reason and espouse her cause? The case is entirely similar when human reason thinks the Divine Intelligence cannot behold future events in any other way than she herself is capable of perceiving them. For thus you argue:—

4907 *azeins*—ayein  
4908 *vniuersel*—vniuersels  
4911 [*soth*]—from C.  
4914 *fals whiche*—false which

4917 *wit*—witte  
4918 *soþely*—soothly  
4923 *knowynge*—knowy  
4926 *zeue*—yeuen

4926 *stedfast*—stidefast  
4930 [*and*]—from C.  
4931 *or*—*and* of



What things are not necessitated cannot be fore-known; therefore there is no prescience of these things, for, if there were, everything would be fixed by an absolute necessity. If it were possible to enjoy the intelligence of the Deity, we should then deem it right that

4944 sense and imagination should yield to reason, and also judge it proper that human reason should submit to the Divine Intelligence. Let us, therefore, strive to elevate ourselves to the height of the supreme intelligence—there shall reason see what she cannot discover in herself; and that is in what manner the prescience of God sees and defines all things; although they have no certain event; and she will see that this is no mere conjecture, but rather simple, supreme, and unlimited knowledge.

[The 5<sup>th</sup> Metur.] Various are the shapes of created beings. Some creep along the ground and trace the dust in furrows as they go; others with nimble wings float through the air; some with their feet impress the ground, or tread lightly o'er the meads, or seek the shady grove.

yif it ne seme nat to men þat somme þinges han certeyne *and* necessarie bytydnyges. þei ne mowen nat ben wist byforn certeynely to bytiden. þan nis [ther] no prescience of þilke þinges. *and* yif we trowen þat prescience ben in þise þinges. þan is þer no þinge þat it ne bitidiþ by necessite. but certys yif we myzten han þe iugement of þe deuyne þouzt as we \*ben parsoners of resoun. ryzt so as we han demed. it byhoueþ þat ymaginacioun *and* wit ben byneþe resoun. ryzt so wolde we demen þat it were ryztful þing þat mans resoun auzt[e] to summitten it self *and* to ben byneþe þe deuyne þouzt. for whiche þat yif we mowen. as who seiþ. þat yif þat we mowen I conseil[e] þat we enhance vs in to þe heyzt of þilke souereyne intelligence. for þere shal resoun wel seen þat þat it ne may nat by-holden in it self. *and* certys þat is þis in what manere þe prescience of god seeþ alle þinges *certeins and* difinissed al þouzt þei ne han no certein issues or by-tydnyges. ne þis is non oppinioun but it is raþer þe simpliceite of þe souereyn science þat nis nat enclosed nor yshet wiþinne no boundes.

## QUAM UARIIS FIGURIS.

þE bestes passen by þe erþes by ful dyuerse figures for somme of hem han hir bodies straucht *and* crepen in þe dust *and* drawen after hem a traies or a forge contynued. þat is to sein as addres or snakes. *and* oþer bestes by [the] wandryng lyztnesse of hir wenges beten þe wyndes *and* ouer-swymmen þe spaces of þe longe eyer by moist flee[y]nge. *and* oþer bestes gladen hem to diggen her traas or her stappes in þe erþe wiþ hir goynge or wiþ her feet. or to gone eyþe[r] 4965 by þe grene feldes or [elles] to walken vnder þe wodes.

4938 [ther]—from C.  
4939 trowen—trowe  
4942 parsoners—parsoneres  
4945 mans—mannes  
4946 auzt[e]—owte  
4947 whiche—which  
4948 þat yif—yif þat

4949 heyzt—heihte  
bere—ther  
4952 þouzt—MS. þouzt  
4955 no—none  
4957 somme—som  
4959 forge contynued —  
forwh lkonutynned

4959 addres—nadriss  
4960 [the]—from C.  
4963 hem—hem self  
stappes—steppis  
4964 or to gone—*and* to gon  
eyþe[r]—eyther  
4965 [elles]—from C.

and al be it so þat þou seest þat þei alle discorden by dyurse formes. algate hire [faces] enclini[n]g heueþ hire dulle wittes. Onlyche þe lynage of man heueþ heyest hys heyze heued and stondeþ lyzt wiþ hys vpryzt body and byholdeþ þe erþe vndir hym. [and] but-3if þou erþely man wexest yuel oute of þi witte. þis figure amonesteþ þe þat axest þe heuene wiþ þi ryzt[e] visage. and hast areised þi forhede to beren vp on heye þi corage so þat þi þouzt ne be nat yheuied ne put lowe vndir foot. sen þat þi body is so heye areised.

4975

## PROSA VLTIMA.

## QUONIAM IGITUR UTI PAULO ANTE.

þ Er-fore þan as I haue shewed a litel her byforne þat al þinge þat is ywist nis nat knowen by hys nature propre. but by þe nature of hem þat comprehend it. ¶ Lat vs loke now in as moche as it is leueful to vs. as who seiþ lat vs loken now as we mowen whiche þat þe estat is of þe deuyne substaunce so þat we mowen [ek] knowen what his science is. þe comune iugement of alle creatures resonables þan is þis þat god is eterne. lat vs considere þan what is eternite. For certys þat shal shewen vs to-gidre þe deuyne nature and þe deuyne science ¶ Eternite þan is perfit possessioun and al togidre of lijf interminable and þat sheweþ more clerely by þe comparisoun or collacioun of temporel þinges. for al þing þat lyueþ in tyme it is present and procediþ fro preterit3 in to futures. þat is to sein. fro tyme passed in to tyme comynge. ne þer nis no þing establised in tyme þat may enbracen to-gidre al þe space of hys lijf. for certys 3it ne haþ it nat taken þe tyme of þe morwe. and it haþ lost þat of 3ister-day. and certys in þe lijf

Though we see an endless variety of forms, yet all are prone; to the earth they bend their looks, increasing the heaviness of their dull sense. Man alone doth raise aloft his noble head; light and erect he spurns the earth. Thou art admonished by this figure then, unless by sense deceived, that whilst taught by thy lofty mien to look above, thou shouldst elevate thy mind lest it sink below its proper level.

[The 6<sup>th</sup> prose and the laste.]

Since everything which is known is not, as I have shown, perceived by its own inherent properties, but by the faculties of those comprehending them, let us now examine the disposition of the Divine nature. All rational creatures agree in affirming that God is eternal. And eternity is a full, total, and perfect possession of a life which shall never end. This will appear more clearly from a comparison with temporal things. Temporal existence proceeds from the past to the present, and thence to the future. And there is nothing under the law of time, which can at once comprehend the whole space of its existence. Having lost yesterday it does not as yet enjoy to-morrow; and as for to-day it consists only in the present transitory moment.

4967 [faces]—from C.  
algate—algates  
enclini[n]g—enclynyd  
4968 Onlyche—Oonly  
heyest—heyste  
4970 erþe—erthes  
4971 oute—owt  
witte—wit

4972 ryzt[e]—ryhte  
hast—MS. hape, C. hast  
4973 forhede—foreheuyd  
on heye—a heygh  
4974 foot sen—foote syn  
4977 al þinge — alle thinges  
4979 moche—mochel  
4980 loken—loke

4980 whiche—which  
4981 [ek]—from C.  
4987 clerely—cleerly  
4989 al—alle  
4993-4 haþ—MS. haþe  
4993 þe (2)—to  
4994 þat—the tyme

Whatever, therefore, is subjected to a temporal condition, as Aristotle thought of the world, may be without beginning and without end; and although its duration may extend

[\* fol. 39.] to an infinity of time, yet it cannot rightly be called eternal: for it doth not comprehend at once the whole extent of its infinite duration, having no knowledge of things future which are not yet arrived. For what is eternal must be always present to itself and master of itself, and have always with it the infinite succession of time. Therefore some philosophers, who had heard that

5011

Plato believed that this world had neither beginning nor end, falsely concluded, that the created universe was coeternal with its Creator. But it is one thing to be conducted through a life of infinite duration, which was Plato's opinion of the world, and another thing to comprehend at once the whole extent of this duration as present which, it is manifest, can only belong to the Divine mind. Nor ought it to seem to us that God is prior to and more ancient than his creatures by the space of

of þis day 3e ne lyuen no more but ryzt as in þis moeu-  
able *and* transitorie moment. þan þilke þinge þat suffriþ  
temporel condicioun. a[l]þoughe þat [it] bygan neuer  
to be. ne þoughe it neuere cese forto be. as aristotle  
demde of þe worlde. and al þou3 þat þe lif of it be  
strecchid wiþ infinite of tyme. 3it al\*gates nis it no  
swiche þing þat men myzten trowen by ryzt þat it is  
eterne. for al þou3 þat it comprehende *and* embrace þe  
space of life infinite. 3it algates ne [em]braceþ it nat þe  
space of þe lif alto-gidre. for it ne haþ nat þe futures  
þat ne ben nat 3it. ne it ne haþ no lenger þe preteritz  
þat ben ydon or ypassed. but þilke þing þan þat haþ  
*and* comprehendij to-gidre alle þe plente of þe lif in-  
terminable. to whom þere ne failiþ nat of þe future.  
*and* to whom þer nis nat of þe preterit escapid nor  
ypassed. þilk[e] same is ywitnessed or yproued by ryzt  
to ben eterne. and it byhoueþ by necessite þat þilke  
þinge be alwey present to hym self *and* compotent. as  
who seiþ alwey present to hym self *and* so myzty þat al  
by ryzt at hys plesaunce. *and* þat he haue al present  
þe infinit of þe moeuable tyme. wherfore som men  
trowen wrongefully þat whan þei heren þat it semid[e]  
to plato þat þis worlde ne had[de] neuer bygynnyng  
of tyme. ne þat it neuere shal haue faylyng. þei wenen  
in þis manere þat þis worlde ben maked coeterne wiþ  
his makere. as who seiþ. þei wenen þat þis worlde *and*  
god ben maked to-gidre eterne. and it is a wrongful  
wenyng. for oþer þing is it to ben yladd by lif in-  
terminable as plato graunted[e] to þe worlde. *and* oþer  
þing is it to embracen to-gidre alle þe presence to þe lif  
interminable. þe whiche þing it is clere *and* manifest

4097 a[l]þoughe—al-thogh  
[it]—from C.

4999 worlde—world

5001 swiche—swych

5002 eterne— from C., MS.

eternite

5003 life—lyf

5004-5-6 haþ—MS. haþe

5006 ydon—MS. ydone, C. I.

doon

5007 alle—al

5008-9 nat—nawht

5010 þilk[e]—þilke

or—*and*

5014 by—be

5018 semid[e]—semede

5017 worlde—world

had[de]—hadde

5018 haue—han

5019-20 worlde—world

5022 yladd—MS. yladde, C.

I-lad

5023 worlde—world

5024 embracen—enbrace

alle—al

presence to—present of

5025 clere—cleer



þat it is *propre* to þe deuine þouzt. ne it ne sholde nat  
semen to vs þat god is elder þan þinges þat ben ymaked  
by quantite of tyme. but raþer by þe *proprete* of hys  
symple nature. for þis ilke infinit[e] moeuynge of temporel  
þinges folwiþ þis presentarie estat of þe lijf *inmoeue-*  
*able.* *and* so as it ne may nat contrefeten it ne feynen  
it ne ben euene lyke to it. for þe *inmoeueablete.* þat is  
to seyn þat is in þe eternite of god. ¶ it faileþ *and*  
falleþ in to moeuynge fro þe simplicite of [the] pre-  
sence of god. *and* disencresisþ to þe infinite quantite of  
*future and* of *preterit.* *and* so as it ne may nat han to-  
gidre al þe plente of þe lif. algates 3itte for as moche as  
it ne cesiþ neuere forto ben in som manere it semeþ  
somde[1] to vs þat it folwiþ *and* resembliþ þilke þing  
þat it ne may nat attayne to. ne fulfille. *and* byndeþ it  
self to som manere presence of þis litel *and* swifte  
moment. þe whiche presence of þis lytele *and* swifte  
moment. for þat it bereþ a manere ymage or lykenesse  
of þe ay dwellynge presence of god. it graunteþ to  
swiche manere þinges as it bitidiþ to þat it semeþ hem  
þat þise þinges han ben *and* ben *and* for [þat] þe pre-  
sence of swiche litel moment ne may nat dwelle þer-for-  
[it] rauyssid[e] *and* took þe infinit[e] wey of tyme. þat  
is to seyn by successioun. *and* by þis manere it is ydon.  
for þat it sholde continue þe lif in goynge of þe whiche  
lif it ne myzt[e] nat embrace þe plente in dwellynge.  
*and* for þi yif we willen putte worþi name[s] to þinges  
*and* folwen plato. lat vs seyn þan sobely þat god is  
eterne. *and* þat þe worlde is perpetuel. þan syn þat  
euery iugement knoweþ *and* comprehendisþ by hys owen  
nature þinges þat ben subiect vnto hym. þere is sobely  
al-wey to god an eterne *and* presentarie estat. *and* þe

time, but rather by the simple and undivided properties of his nature. The infinite progression of temporal things imitates the ever-present condition of an immovable life: and since it cannot copy nor equal it from an immovable and simply present state, it passes into motion and into an infinite measure of past and future time. But since it cannot possess at once the whole extent of its duration, yet, as it never ceases wholly to be, it faintly emulates that whose perfection it can neither attain nor express, by attaching itself to

5041

the present fleeting inoment, which, because it resembles the durable present time, imparts to those things that partake of it an appearance of existence. But as it cannot stop or abide it pursues its course through infinite time, and by gliding along it continues its duration, the plenitude of which it could not comprehend, by abiding in a permanent state. If we would follow Plato in giving things their right names, let us say that God is *eternal* and the world *perpetual*. His knowledge, surpassing the progression of time, is ever present, containing the infinite space

5032 *lyke*—lyk  
5034 [*the*—from C.  
5039 *somde*[1]—somdel  
5040 *fulfille*—fullfyllen  
5041 *litel*—fr. m. C., MS. lykly  
5042 *whiche*—which  
*lytele*—from C., MS. lykly

5046 *ben* (1)—yben  
[*þat*—from C.  
5047 *swiche*—swych  
5048 [*it*—from C.  
5051 *myzt*[e]—myhte  
5052 *willen putte*—wollen  
putten

5052 *name*[s]—names  
5053 *sobely*—sothly  
5054 *worlde*—world  
5055 *owen*—owne  
5056 *sobely*—sothly  
5057 *al-wey*—al-weys

of past and future times, and embraces in his clear insight all things, as if they were now transacting. Prescience is, then, a foreknowledge, not of what is to come, but of the present and *never-failing now* (in which God [\* fol. 39 b.] sees all things as if immovably present). Therefore *foreknowledge* is not so applicable a term as *providence*—for God looks down upon all things from the summit of the universe. Do you think that God imposes a necessity on things by beholding them? It is not so in human affairs. Do your view

5073

of an action lay any necessity upon it? *B. No. P.* By parity of reason it is clear that whilst you see only some things in a limited instant, God sees all things in his ever-present time. His Divine prescience therefore does not change the nature of things—but only beholds those things as present to him which shall in time be produced. Nor does he judge confusedly of them, but knows at one view what will necessarily and what will not necessarily happen.

The eye of God, seeing all things, doth not alter the properties of things, for everything is present to him, though its temporal event is future.

science of hym þat ouer-passeþ alle temporel moe[ue]-ment dwelliþ in þe symplicite of hys presence *and* embraceþ *and* considereþ alle þe infinit spaces of tymes preterit3 *and* futures *and* lokeþ in þis symple knowynge alle þinges of preterit ryzt as þei weren ydoon presently ryzt now ¶ yif þou wolt þan þenke *and* avisen þe prescience by whiche it knoweþ al[le] þinges \*þou ne shalt nat demen it as prescience of þinges to comen. but þou shalt demen [it] more ryztfully þat it is science of presence or of instance þat neuer ne fayleþ. for whiche it nis nat ycleped *providence* but it sholde raþer be cleped *purueance* þat is establissed ful fer fro ryzt lowe þinges. *and* byholdeþ from a-fer alle þinges ryzt as it were fro þe heye heyzte of þinges. whi axest þou þan or why disputest þou þan þat þilke þinges ben don by necessite whiche þat ben yseyen *and* yknownen by þe deuyne syzt. syn þat for soþe men ne maken nat þilke þinges necessariē. whiche þat þe[i] seen be ydoon in hire syzt. for addiþ þi byholdynge any necessite to þilke þinges þat þou byholdest present. ¶ Nay quod I. *p.* Certys þan yif men myzte maken any digne comparisoun or collacioun of þe presence diuine. *and* of þe presence of mankynde. ryzt so as 3e seen somme þinges in þis temporel presente. ryzt so seeþ god alle þinges by hys eterne present. ¶ wherfore þis dyuyne prescience ne chaungeþ nat þe nature ne þe proprete of þinges but byholdeþ swyche þinges present to hym ward. as þei shollen bytiden to 3ow ward in tyme to come. ne it ne confoundeþ nat þe Iugement3 of þinges but by of syzt of hys þouzt he knoweþ þe þinges to comen as wel necessariē as nat necessariē. ryzt so as whan 3e seen to-gidre a man walke on þe erþe *and* þe sonne arysen in [the] heuene. al be it so þat 3e seen *and* byholden þat

5058 *alle*—al  
*moeuement*—moeuement  
5063 *þenke*—thinken  
*avisen*—auiyse  
5064 *whiche*—which  
*al[le]*—alle

5066 *shalt*—shal  
[*it*]—from C.  
5068 *whiche*—which  
5074-76 *syzt*—syhte  
5075 *whiche*—which  
þe[i]—they

5085 *come*—comyu  
5086 *of syzt*—O syhte  
5087 *he knoweþ*—MS. repeats  
5090 [*the*]—from C.

oon *and* þat oþer to-gidre. 3it naþeles 3e demen *and* discernen þat þat oon is uoluntarie *and* þat oþer is necessarie. ¶ Ryzt so þan [the] deuyne lokinge byholdyng alle þinges vnder hym ne troubleþ nat þe qualite of þinges þat ben certeynely present to hym ward. but as to þe condicioun of tyme for soþe þei ben future. for whiche it folwiþ þat þis nis non oppinioun. but raper a stedfast knowyng ystrenged by soþenes. þat whan þat god knoweþ any þinge to be he ne vnwoot nat þat þilke þinge wanteþ necessite to be. þis is to seyn þat whan þat god knoweþ any þinge to bitide. he woot wel þat it ne haþ no necessite to bitide. *and* yif þou seist here þat þilke þinge þat god seeþ to bytide it ne may nat vnbytide. as who seiþ it mot bitide. ¶ *and* þilke þinge þat þat ne may nat vnbytide it mot bitide by necessite. *and* þat þou streine me to þis name of necessite. certys I wol wel confessen *and* byknowe a þinge of ful sadde trouþe. but vnneþ shal þere any wyzt [mowe] seen it or comen þer-to. but yif þat he be byholder of þe deuyne þouzte. ¶ for I wol answere þe þus. þat þilke þinge þat is future whan it is referred to þe deuyne knowyng þan is it necessarie. but certys whan it is vnderstonden in hys owen kynde men sen it [is] vtterly fre *and* absolut from alle necessite. for certys þer ben two maneres of necessites. þat oon necessite is symple as þus. þat it byhoueþ by necessite þat alle men be mortal or dedely. an oþer necessite is condicionel as þus. yif þou wost þat a man walkiþ. it byhoueþ by necessite þat he walke. þilke þinge þan þat any wyzt haþ yknowe to be. it ne may ben non oþer weyes þan he knoweþ it to be. ¶ but þis condicioun ne draweþ nat wiþ hir þilke necessite symple. For certys þis necessite condicionel.

When God knows that anything is to be, he knows at the same time that it is not under the necessity of being—but this is not conjecture, but certain knowledge founded upon truth. If you insist that *what God foresees shall and must happen*; and that which cannot do otherwise than happen, must needs happen, and so bind me to admit a necessity, I must confess that things are under such a restraint; but it is a truth that we scarce can comprehend, unless we be acquainted with the Divine counsels. For I will answer you thus. That the  
5105

thing which is to happen in relation to the Divine knowledge is necessary; but, considered in its own nature, seems free and absolute. There are two kinds of necessity—one simple; as men must necessarily die—the other is conditional, as if you know a man walks he must necessarily walk—for that which is known cannot be otherwise than what it is apprehended to be. But this condition does not infer the absolute necessity, for the nature of the thing itself does not here constitute the necessity, but the necessity arises from the conjunction of the condition. No necessity compels a man to walk who does so

5092 *discerne*—discernen  
5093 [*the*]—from C.  
5097 *whiche*—which  
5098 *stedfast*—stidefast  
*soþenes*—soþtnesse  
5102 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
5104 *bitide*—bide

5108 *sadde*—sad  
*vnneþ*—vnnethe  
[*mowe*]—from C.  
5109 *comen*—come  
5110 *þouzte*—thoght  
*answerc*—answern  
5113 *sen*—MS. sene, C. sei

5113 [*is*]—from C.  
5117 *dedely*—dedly  
5119 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
5121 *condicioun*—from C.  
MS. *necessite*



willingly, but it must be necessary that he walk when he does step forward. So everything that is present to the eye of Providence must assuredly be, although there is

[\* fol. 40.] nothing in its own nature to constitute that necessity. Since God beholds all future events proceeding from free-will as actually present—these events in relation to Divine sight are necessary—yet in relation to themselves they are absolutely free. All things which God foresees shall surely come to pass; but some of these things proceed from free-will, which although they hap-

5139

pen, yet do not thereby change their nature, as before they happened they had it in their power not to happen. But it is a thing of no moment then, whether things are necessary in their own nature or not, since by the condition of the Divine knowledge they fell out as if they were necessitated.

P. The difference is explained in the instances lately given you, of the man walking, &c. The event of the former was necessary before it befell, whereas that of the latter was altogether free. B. Then I did not go from the

þe propre nature of it ne make þit nauzt. but þe adieccioun of þe condicioun makip it. for no necessite ne constreynep a man to [gon / þat] goop by his propre wille. al be it so þat whan he goop þat it is necessarie þat he goop. ¶ Ryzt on þis same manere þan. yif þat þe purueaunce of god seep any þing present. þan mot pilke \*þinge be by necessite. al þou3 þat it ne haue no necessite of hys owen nature. but certys þe futures þat bytyden by freedom of arbitre god seep hem alle to-gidre present3. þise þinges þan [yif] þei ben referred to þe deuyne syzt. þan ben þei makend necessarie to þe condicioun of þe deuyne knowynge. but certys yif pilke þinges ben considred by hem self þei ben absolut of necessite. and ne forleten nat ne cesen nat of þe liberte of hire owen nature. þan certys wiþ outen doute alle þe þingus shollen be doon whiche þat god woot by-forþ þat þei ben to comen. but somme of hem comen and bitiden of [free] arbitre or of fre wille. þat al be it so þat þei by-tiden. 3it algates ne lese þei nat hire propre nature ne beynge. by þe whiche first or þat þei were doon þei hadden power nat to han bitidd. Boece. what is þis to seyn þan quod I. þat þinges ne ben nat necessarie by hire propre nature. so as þei comen in alle maneres in þe lykenesse of necessite by þe condicioun of þe deuyne science. Philosophie. þis is þe difference quod she. þat þo þinges þat I purposed[e] þe a litel here byforþ. þat is to seyn þe sonne arysynge and þe man walkynge þat þerwhiles þat pilke þinges ben ydon. þei ne myzten nat ben vndon. naþeles þat oon of hem or it was ydon it byhoued[e] by necessite þat it was ydon. but nat þat oper. ryzt so it is here þat þe þinges þat god haþ present.

5123 nauzt—nat

5125 [gon þat]—from C.

wille—wil

5128 mot—MS. mote, C. mot

5131 present<sub>3</sub>—present

5132 [yif]—from C.

syzt—syhte

5137 wiþ outen—with-owte

5138 whiche—which

5139 somme—som

5140 [free]—from C.

5141 ne (2)—C. in

5142 whiche—which

were doon—weeryn Idoon

5143 bitidd—MS. bitidde, C.

bityd

5148 purposed[e] — pur posede

5150 ydon—MS. ydone, C.

I-doon

myzten—myhte

5151 vndon—MS. vndone, C.

vndoon

5151-2 ydon—MS. ydone, C.

I-doon

5152 byhoued[e]—houyd

5153 haþ—MS. haþe

wiþ outen doute þei shulle ben. but somme of hem descendip of þe nature of þinges as þe sonne arysynge. *and* somme descendip of þe power of þe doers as þe man walkynge. ¶ þan seide I. no wronge þat yif þat þise þinges ben referred to þe deuyne knowynge þan ben þei necessarie. *and* yif þei ben considered by hem selfe þan ben þei absolut from þe bonde of necessite. ryzt so [as] alle þinges þat appiereþ or sheweþ to þe wittes yif þou referre it to resoun it is vniuersel. *and* yif þou referre it or look[e] it to it self. þan is it synguler. but now yif þou seist þus þat yif it be in my power to change my purpose. þan shal I voide þe purueaunce of god. whan þat perauenture I shal han chaunged þo þinges þat he knoweþ byform. þan shal I answeere þe þus ¶ Certys þou maist wel chaungen þi purpos but for as mochel as þe present soþenesse of þe deuyne purueaunce byholdeþ þat þou maist chaungen þi purpose. *and* wheþir þou wolt change it or no. *and* whider-ward þat þou tourne it. þou maist nat eschewen þe deuyne prescience ryzt as þou ne maist nat fleen þe syzt of þe present eye. al þou; þat þou tourne þi self by þi fre wille in to dyuerse accioun. ¶ But þou maist seyn aþeyne how shal it þan be. shal nat þe dyuyne science ben chaunged by my disposicioun whan þat I wol o þing now *and* now an oþer. *and* þilke prescience ne semeþ it nat to enterchaunge stoundes of knowynges. as who seiþ. ne shal it nat seme to vs þat þe deuyne prescience enterchaungeþ hys dyuers stoundes of knowynge. so þat it knowe somme tyme o þing *and* somme tyme þe contrarie. ¶ No for soþe. [quod I] for þe deuyne syzt renneþ to-forne *and* seeþ alle futures *and* clepeþ hem aþein

truth when I said that some things referred to the Divine knowledge are necessary, while considered in themselves they are not under the bond of necessity. In the same way everything that is an object of sense is *general* when considered in relation to reason—but particular when considered by itself. But you may say—If I am able to change my purpose I can deceive providence by changing that which she hath foreseen I would do.

P. You may perhaps alter your purpose—but as providence takes note of your  
5168

intentions, you cannot deceive her; for you cannot escape the divine prescience though you have the power, through a free-will, to vary and diversify your actions. But you may say—Shall the divine knowledge be changed according to the mutability of my disposition, and the apprehensions of the Deity fluctuated with my changing purposes? No, indeed! The view of the Deity fore-runs every future event, and brings it back into the presence of his own knowledge, which does not vary, as you imagine, to conform to your caprices, but remaining fixed, at once

5154 *wiþ outen*—with-owte  
*shulle*—shollen  
5156 *doers*—doeres  
5157 *wronge*—wrong  
5159 *selfe*—self  
5160 *from*—fro  
*bonde*—bond  
[as]—from C.

5163 *look[e]*—loke  
5166 *þo*—the  
5169 *soþenesse*—soþnesse  
5170 *chaungen*—chaunge  
5173 *syzt*—syhte  
5175 *wille*—wyl  
5177 *wol*—wole  
5179 *enterchaunge*—MS. en-

*terchaungyng*, C. *entre-  
chaunge*  
5181 *hys*—hise  
5182 *somme* (1)—sum  
*somme* (2)—som  
5183 *syzt*—syhte  
5184 *to-forne*—to-forn

foresees and comprehends all your changes. This faculty of comprehending and seeing all things as present, God does not receive from the issue of futurities, but from the simplicity of his own nature. Here, then, is an answer to your former objection—that it is folly to think that our future actions and events are the causes of the prescience of God. For the Divine mind, embracing and com-

prehending all things by a present knowledge, plans and directs all things and is not dependent upon futurity. Since no necessity is imposed

5200

upon things by the Divine prescience, there remains to men an inviolable freedom of will. And those laws are just which assign rewards and punishments to men possessing free-will. Moreover, God, who sits on high, foreknows all things, and the eternal presence of his knowledge concurs with the future quality of our actions, dispensing rewards to good and punishments to evil men.

Nor are our hopes and prayers reposed in, and addressed to God in vain, which when they are sincere cannot be inefficacious nor unsuccessful. Resist and turn from vice—honour and

and retourniþ hem to þe presence of hys propre knowynge. ne he ne entrechaungeþ nat [so] as þou wenest þe stoundes of forknowyng [as] now þis now þat. but he ay dwellynge comiþ byforn and enbraceþ at o strook alle þi mutaciouns. and þis presence to comprehendend and to sen alle þinges. god ne haþ nat taken it of þe bitydyng of þinges forto come. but of hys propre symplidite. ¶ and her by is assoiled þilke þing þat þou putttest a litel her byforne. þat is to seyne þat it is vnworþi þinge to seyn þat oure futures zeuen cause of þe science of god ¶ For certys \*þis strengþe of þe deuyne science whiche þat enbraceþ alle þinge by his presentarie knowynge establisseyþ manere to alle þingus and it ne awiþ nat to lattere þinges. and syn þat þise þinges ben þus. ¶ þat is to seyn syn þat necessite nis nat in þinges by þe deuyne prescience. þan is þer fredom of arbitre. þat dwelleþ hool and vnwemmed to mortal men. ne þe lawes ne purpose nat wikkedly meedes and peynès to þe willynges of men þat ben vnbounde and quit of alle necessite. ¶ And god byholder and forwiter of alle þinges dwelliþ aboue and þe present eternite of hys syzt renneþ alwey wiþ þe dyuerse qualite of oure dedes dispensyng and ordeynynge medes to good[e] men. and tourmentz to wicked men. ¶ ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben þer nat put in god hope and prayeres. þat ne mowen nat ben vnspedful ne wiþ oute effect whan þei ben ryztful ¶ wiþstond þan and eschewe þou vices. worshippe and loue þou vertus. arise þi corage to ryztful hoopes. zelde þou humble preiers an heyze. grete necessite of prowess and vertue is encharged and comaunded to 3ow yif ze nil nat dissimulen. ¶ Syn þat ze worchen and doon. þat is to seyn 3oure dedes and 3oure workes

5186 [so]—from C.  
5187 [as]—from C.  
5188 comiþ—comth  
5190 haþ—MS. habe  
5193 seyne—seyn  
5196 whiche—which  
5198 awiþ—oweth

5199 þat is to — pre-  
science—omitted  
5203 vnbounde—vnbownden  
quit—quite  
5206 syzt—sihte  
5207 good[e]—goode  
5211 wiþstond — MS. wiþ-

stonde, C. withstond  
5213 an heyze—a heygh  
yrets—Gret  
5215 worchen—workyn  
5216 and (2)—or



by-fore þe eyen of þe Iuge þat seeþ *and* demeþ alle  
þinges. [To whom be goye *and* worshiþe bi Infynyt  
tymes / AMEN.]

love virtue, exalt  
your mind to God  
(the truest hope),  
offer up your  
prayers with  
humility. If you  
are sincere you

5219

will feel that you are under an obligation to lead a good and virtuous life, inasmuch as all your actions and works are done in the presence of an all-discerning Judge.

## EXPLICIT LIBER QUINTUS. ET VLTIMUS.

5217 *by-fore*—by-fore5218 [*To whom—Amen*]—  
from C.; MS. reads *et*  
*cetera* after 'þinges.' C.ends with the following  
rubric:  
Explicit expliceat ludere  
scriptor eatFinito libro sit laus *et*  
gloria *Christo*  
Corpore scribentis sit  
*gratia* cunctipotentis

## APPENDIX.

[*Camb. Univ. MS. Ii. 3. 21, fol. 52 b.*]

Chawcer vp-on this fyfte metur of the second book . 50

- A Blyful lyf a paysyble *and* a swete  
 Ledden the poeples in the former age  
 They helde hem paied of the fructes þat þey ete  
 Whiche þat the feldes yaue hem by vsage 4  
 They ne weere nat forpampred *with* owtrage  
 Onknowyn was þ<sup>e</sup> quyerne *and* ek the melle  
 They eten mast hawes *and* swych pownage  
 And dronken water of the colde welle 8
- ¶ Yit nas the grownd nat wounded *with* þ<sup>e</sup> plowh  
 But corn vp-sprong vnsowe of mannes hond  
 þe which they gnodded *and* eete nat half .I.-nowh  
 No man yit knewe the forwes of his lond 12  
 No man the fyr owt of the flynt yit fonde  
 Vn-koruen and vn-grobbed lay the vyne  
 No man yit in the mortar spices grond  
 To clarre ne to sawse of galentyne 16
- ¶ No Madyr welde or wod no litestere  
 Ne knewh / the fles was of is former hewe  
 No flessch ne wyste offence of egge or spere  
 No coyn ne knewh man which is fals or trewe 20  
 No ship yit karf the wawes grene *and* blewe  
 No Marchaunt yit ne fette owt-landiss<sup>h</sup> ware  
 No batails trompes for the werres folk ne knewe  
 Ne towres heye *and* walles rownde or square 24

¶ What sholde it han avayled to werreye  
 Ther lay no *profyt* ther was no *rychesse*  
 But corsed was the tyme .I. dar' wel seye  
*pat* men fyrst dede hir swety bysynesse 28  
 To grobbe vp metal lurkyng in dirkenesse  
*And* in þe Ryuerys fyrst gemmys sowhte  
 Allas than sprong' vp al the cursydnesse  
 Of coueytse *pat* fyrst ovr sorwe browhte 32

[fol. 58.]

¶ Thyse tyrauntz put hem gladly nat in pres  
 No places wyldnesse ne no busshes for to wynne  
 Ther pouerte is as seith diogenes  
 Ther as vitayle ek is so skars *and* thinne 36  
*pat* nat but mast or apples is ther Inne  
 But þer as bagges ben *and* fat vitaile  
 Ther wol they gon *and* spare for no synne  
 With al hir ost the Cyte forto a-sayle 40

¶ Yit was no paleis chaumbres ne non halles  
 In kaues *and* wodes softe *and* swete  
 Sleptin this blyssed folk' *with-owte* walles  
 On gras or leues in *parfyt* Loye reste *and* quiete 44  
 No down of fetheres ne no bleched shete  
 Was kyd to hem but in surte they slepte  
 Hir hertes weere al on *with-owte* galles  
 Euerych of hem his feith to oother kepte 48

¶ Vnforged was the hawberke *and* the plate  
 þe lambyssh poeple voyded of alle vyse  
 Hadden no fantesye to debate  
 But eche of hem wolde oother wel cheryce 52  
 No pride non enuye non Auaryce  
 No lord no taylage by no tyranye  
 Vmblesse *and* pes good feith the emperice  
 . . . . . 56

39, 40 MS. transposes the lines

44 On—MS. Or

56 A line omitted, but no gap left for one.



¶ Yit was nat Iuppiter the lykerous  
 þat fyrst was fadyr of delicacie  
 Come in this world ne nembroth desyrous  
 To regne had nat maad his towres hye 60  
 Allas allas now may [men] wepe And crye  
 For in owre dayes nis but couetyse  
 Dowblenesse *and* tresoun *and* enuye  
 Poyson *and* manslawhtre *and* mordre in sondry wyse

## CAUSER / BALADES DE VILAGE SANZ PEINTURE

¶ This wrecched worlde-is *transmutacioun*  
 As wele / or wo / now poeere *and* now honou  
 With-owten ordyr or wis descresyoun  
 Gouerned is by fortunes errour 4  
 But natheles the lakke of hyr fauowr'  
 Ne may nat don me syngen thowh I. deye  
 Iay tout *perdu* moun temps *et* moun labour [fol. 53 b.]  
 For fynaly fortune .I. the deffye 8

¶ Yit is me left the lyht of my resoun  
 To knowen frend fro foo in thi merowr'  
 So mochel hath yit thy whirlynge vp *and* down  
 I-tawht me for to knowe in an howr 12  
 But trewely no fors of thi reddowr'  
 To hym þat ouer hym self hath the maystrye  
 My suffysaunce shal be my socour'  
 For fynaly fortune I. thee deffye 16

¶ O socrates þou stidfast chaumpyoun  
 She neuer myht[e] be thi tormentowr  
 Thow neuer dreddest hyr oppressyoun  
 Ne in hyr chere fownde thow no sauour' 20  
 Thow knewe wel the deseyte of hyr colour'  
 And þat hir' most[e] worshipec is to lye  
 I knew hir ek a fals dissimulour'  
 For fynaly fortune .I. the deffye 24

## LE RESPOUNCE DE FORTUNE A PLEINTIF.

¶ No man ys wrechchyd but hym self yt wene  
*And* he þat hath hym self hat suffisaunce  
 Whi seysthow thanne y am [to] the so kene  
 þat hast thy self owt of my gouernaunce 28  
 Sey thus graunt *mercy* of thyn haboundaunce  
 That thou hast lent or this why wolt þou stryue  
 What woost thou yit how y the wol auaunce  
*And* ek thou hast thy beste frende a-lyue 32

¶ I haue the tawht deuisoun by-twene  
 Frend of effect *and* frende of cowntenaunce  
 The nedeth nat the galle of no hyene  
 þat cureth eyen derkyd for penaunce 36  
 Now se[st] thou cleer þat weere in ignoraunce  
 Yit halt thin ancre *and* yit thou mayst aryue  
 Ther bownte berth the keye of my substaunce  
*And* ek þou hast thy beste frende alyue 40

¶ How manye haue .I. refused to sustigne  
 Syn .I. the fostred haue in thy plesaunce  
 Wolthow thanne make a statute on þy quyene  
 þat .I. shal ben ay at thy ordynaunce 44  
 Thow born art in my regne of varyaunce  
 Abowte the wheel *with* oother most thou dryue  
 My loore is bet than wikke is thi greuaunce  
*And* ek þou hast thy beste frende a-lyue 48

## LE RESPOUNCE DU PLEINTIF COUNTRÉ FORTUNE.

¶ Thy loore y dempne / it is aduersyte [fol. 54.]  
 My frend maysthow nat reuen blynde goddessse  
 þat .I. thy frendes knowe .I. thanke to the  
 Tak hem agayn / lat hem go lye on presse 52  
 The negardye in kepynge hyr rychesse  
 Prenostik is thou wolt hir' towr' asayle

37 se[st]—partly erased and *ist* written on it in a later hand.  
 41 *igne* of *sustigne* is in a later hand.

Wikke appetyt comth ay before sykenesse  
 In general this rewle may nat fayle 56

LE RESPOUNJE DE FORTUNE COUNTRÉ LE PLEINTIF

¶ Thow pynchest at my mutabylyte  
 For .I. the lente a drope of my rychesse  
 And now me lykyth to *with*-drawe me  
 Whi sholdysthow my realte apresse 60  
 The see may ebbe *and* flowen moore or lesse  
 The welkne hath myht to shyne reyne or hayle,  
 Ryht so mot .I. kythen my brutelnesse  
 In general this rewle may nat fayle 64

LE PLEINTIF

¶ Lo excussyoun of the maieste  
 þat al purueyeth of his ryhtwysnesse  
 That same thinge fortune clepyn ye  
 Ye blynde beestys ful of lewednesse 68  
 The heuene hath *proprete* of sykyrnesse  
 This world hath euer resteles trauayle  
 Thy laste day is ende of myn inter[e]sse  
 In general this rewele may nat fayle 72

LENUOY DE FORTUNE

¶ Prynses .I. prey yow of yowre gentilleses  
 Lat nat this man on me thus crye *and* pleyne  
 And .I. shal quyte yow yowre bysynesse  
 At my requeste as thre of yow or tweyne 76  
 þat but yow lest releue hym of hys peyne  
 Preyeth hys best frend of his noblesse  
 That to som betere estat he may attayne



## GLOSSARIAL INDEX.

- ABAIST = ABYEST, sufferest, endurest, 39/1014  
 ABAIST, abashed, 107/3047  
 ABASSEN, to be abashed, dismayed, 146/4213  
 ABESID (= ABAYSSHD), abashed, 7/92  
 ABIDE, to await, 7/93. 'ABIDE after' = look after, expect, 13/250; *p.p.* ABIDEN, waited, 86/2405  
 Abieþ, suffers, 109/3101  
 ABLYNGE, enabling, fitting (*aptans*), 26/624, 88/2440  
 Abood, abode, 63/1716  
 Aboven, above, 6/52  
 Abreggyng, curtailng; hence *gain* obtained by curtailment (*compendium*), 151/4355  
 Accoie, to soothe, quiet (*demulcere*), 38/967  
 Accordance, agreement, 143/4134  
 Accordant, agreeing, unanimous, 19/431  
 Accorde, to agree, 42/1080  
 Accoumpte, account, 47/1251  
 Accountyng, calculation, 8/110  
 Achat, purchasé, 15/310  
 Acheve, to achieve, accomplish, 18/404  
 Achoken, to choke, 47/1235  
 Accomplise, Accomplisse, to accomplish, 92/2575, 118/3356  
 Acordable, agreeing, 62/1694  
 Acusor, informer, 72/1990  
 Adresse (Nadre), adder, 170/4959  
 Adoune, down, downward, 7/92  
 Adounward, downwards, 7/87  
 Adrad, in fear, afraid, 43/1132  
 Adresse, to direct, control, 163/4721  
 Afer, afar, 164/4767  
 Agast, aghast, frightened, 76/2107  
 Agaste, to terrify, frighten, 141/4051  
 Agon, ago, 70/1907  
 Agreeableté, goodwill, 42/1099  
 Agrisen, to be afraid, dread, 10/178, 31/777  
 Ajuge, to adjudge, 15/325  
 Aknowe, acknowledged, 17/367  
 Aldirmost, most of all, 124/3557  
 Algates, Algate, yet, nevertheless, 19/439, 68/1849, 81/2242, 162/4696, 4698  
 Allegge, to alleviate, 124/3529  
 Alouterly, utterly, entirely, 109/3090  
 Alperfairest, fairest of all, 87/2422

- Alperfirst, first of all, 10/180  
 Alpermoste, most of all, 158/4563  
 Alperworste, worst of all. 157/4562  
 Alyene, to alienate, 27/671  
 Amenuse, to lessen, diminish, 19/426, 40/1039  
 Amenusynge, diminution, 46/1192  
 Ameve, Amoeve, Amove, to move, 6/64, 23/551  
 Amoneste, to admonish, 171/4971  
 Amonestyng, admonition, exhortation, 149/4296  
 Amongus, amongst, 52/1380  
 Amonicioun, admonition, 13/253  
 Amynistre, to administer, 135/3891  
 Ancre, anchor, 41/1050  
 Angre, grief, misery, 41/1072  
 Anguise, Angysse, anguish, 79/2177; to torment, 80/2198  
 Anguissous, anxious, sorrowful, 41/1062, 1606  
 Anoié, to be grieved, be sorry, 41/1058  
 Anoienge, 22/532  
 Anoiés, hurtful, 47/1238  
 Anoióus, annoying, hurtful, 7/102  
 An-oone, anon, 42/1086  
 Anoyously, dangerously, hurtfully, 80/2214  
 Apaise, to appease, 148/4278  
 Apasse, to pass away, go, 46/1195  
 Aperceive, to perceive, 16/344, 134/3845  
 Apertly, plainly, 17/386, 91/2543  
 Appaie, to please, satisfy, 47/1235  
 Appaire, to impair, 25/597  
 Apparaile, to clothe, adorn, 8/116  
 Apparaillement, clothing, ornament, 49/1300  
 Appertiene, to appertain, 73/1996  
 Applien, bend to, join, 161/4660  
 Appresse, to oppress, 184/60  
 Aprochen, to approach, 6/63, 66  
 Arace, Arase, Arrace, to tear, tear from, separate, 11/196, 27/671, 98/2774, 152/4278  
 Araise, Areise, Areyse, to raise, 51/1357, 118/3369, 178/5212  
 Arbitre, will, free will, 156/4500  
 Ardaunt, ardent, 106/3031  
 Aresten, to stop, arrest, 32/815  
 Aretten, to ascribe to, impute to, 40/1016  
 Arist, arises, 143/4138  
 Armurers, armours, arms, 51/1342  
 Armures, armour, 9/131  
 Arst, first, 95/2675  
 Arwe, arrow, 148/4262  
 Arysynge, rising, 22/512  
 Aryve, to bring to shore, 122/3479  
 Asayle, to assail, 181/40  
 Ascape, to escape, 8/129  
 Asondre, asunder, 64/1740  
 Aspre, sharp, rough, 32/806, 80/2216  
 Asprenesse, sharpness, 127/3627  
 Assaie, to essay, 42/1083  
 Assemble, to gather together, amass (money), 80/2203  
 Asssure, to assure, 16/330  
 Assoilen, to absolve, pay, unloose, dissolve, 149/4303, 154/4459  
 Astat, estate, state, 30/738  
 Astoned, astonished, 7/92, 63/1702; *stupidus*, 122/3471  
 Astonynge, Astonyenge, astonishment, 9/134, 132/3780  
 Ataste, to taste, 30/756  
 Ataynt, Ateint, attained, knowing, experienced, 31/772, 69/1905

- Attayne, to reach, 12/227  
 Atte, at the, 95/2675  
 Attemperaunce, tempering, temperament, 138/3973, 144/4145  
 Attempre, to temper, moderate, 8/115, 111/3154; control, 163/4721; (*adj.*) modest, 29/728, 40/1033  
 Atteyne, to attain, 118/3358  
 Atwyne, in two, 98/2769  
 Avalen, to fall down, 143/4139  
 Avaunce, to advance, further, 41/1057  
 Avaunte, to boast, 5/26, 19/426  
 Auctorité, authority, 7/91  
 Aventerouse, fortuitous, 28/697, 40/1018  
 Aventure, event, 21/476  
 Autour, author, 58/1556  
 Au3te, ought, 11/213  
 Avisen, to consider, 174/5063  
 Awaite, snare, 80/2214  
 Awaitour, one who lies in wait, 121/3463  
 Awip = aweþ, oweth (*debet*), 178/5198  
 Ay, ever, 184/55  
 Ay-dwellynge, ever-dwelling, 173/5044  
 Ayenis, against, 97/2749  
 Axe, to ask, 17/357, 24/579  
 A3eins, A3eynes, A3eynest, against, 10/183, 11/194, 12/221, 13/255  
 A3einewarde, on the contrary, on the other hand, 42/1098  
 Bacine, basin, 133/3806  
 Bataillen, to war on, do battle against, 18/412  
 Been, bees, 80/2200  
 Ber, did bear, 6/61  
 Bere, Bear, 143/4124  
 Beren on hond, to accuse falsely, 20 449  
 Bet, better, 63/1703  
 Bibled. covered over with blood, 48/1860  
 Bisien, to trouble, 8/112  
 Bitake. *See* Bytake.  
 Bitidd, happened, 176/5143  
 Bitwixen. *See* Bytwixen.  
 Blaundissinge, flattering, 30/749  
 Blaundyshing, flattery, blandishment, 34/866  
 Bleched, bleached, 181/45  
 Blemisse, to blemish, abuse (*lacero*), 20/472  
 Blyssed, blessed, 181/43  
 Blyþenesse, joyfulness, 37/957  
 Boch, botch, blain, sore, 72/1977  
 Bode, to foretell, 143/4130  
 Bole, bull, 148/4274  
 Boot, did bite, 53/1400  
 Bordure, border, hem, 6/50  
 Bosten, to boast, 79/2171  
 Botme, bottom, 12/234  
 Bounté, Bownté, goodness, kindness, 19/444, 46/1202, 183/39  
 Brenne (*pret.* Brende), to burn, 19/437, 106/3031  
 Brid, bird, 68/1867  
 Bristlede, bristly, 148/4281  
 Brode, broadly, plainly, 49/1298  
 Brutel, brittle, fragile, 45/1174  
 Brutelnesse, brittleness, frailty, 184/63  
 Burþe, birth, 78/2165  
 Busshel (corn), 15/312  
 Bydolven (*p.p.*), buried, 151/4348  
 Byen (for *abyen*), suffer, 125/3578  
 Byforen, BYFORN, BYFORNE, before, 20/454



- Bygunne, didst begin, 37/941  
 Bygyle, to beguile, 25/615  
 Byhate, to hate, 75/2051  
 Byheste, promise, 149/4303  
 Byhete, to promise, 61/1651, 69/  
 1903  
 Byhynde, Byhynden, behind,  
 108/3062, 110/3137  
 Byhyzt, promised, 70/1925, 85/  
 2374, 157/4558  
 Byknowen, Byknowe, to acknow-  
 ledge, 146/4211, 175/5107; *p.p.*  
 Byknowen, 90/2514  
 Byleve, believe, 28/695  
 Byname, an additional name, 84/  
 2333  
 Byneþen, beneath, 49/1295  
 Bynomen (*p.p.*), taken from, 124/  
 3527  
 Bynyme, to deprive of, take away,  
 43/1117, 70/1930  
 Byreft, bereft, 33/837  
 Byseche, to beseech, 86/2408  
 Bysmoked, besmoked, 5/49  
 Byspotte, to defile, 73/2009  
 Bystowe, to bestow, 24/585  
 Bysynesse, toil, 184/75  
 Bytake, to entrust, 32/808  
 Bytide (*pret.* BYTIDDE, *p.p.* BY-  
 TID), to befall, happen, 20/474,  
 151/4360, 155/4467  
 Bytwene, between, 6/54  
 Bytwixen, betwixt, 132/3785  
 Bytynge, biting, sharp, 63/1721  
 Bywepe, to weep for, 26/644  
 Byweyle, to bewail, 26/643  
  
 Caitif, Caytif, wretched, 21/489,  
 116/3289  
 Careyne, carcase, corpse, 116/  
 3307  
 Cariages, taxes (*vectigalia*), 15/  
 303  
 Celebrable, commendable, noted,  
 84/2320, 147/4257  
 Certein, certain, 170/4952  
 Cese, to cease, 36/904, 130/3716  
 Cesse, to cease, 133/3821  
 Chalenge, to claim, 52/1380  
 Chastie, Chastysen, to chastise,  
 125/3579, 145/4170  
 Chayere, chair, seat, 21/503  
 Cheminey, furnace (*caminus*), 12/  
 236  
 Cheryce, to cherish, 181/52  
 Chesen, to choose, 76/2096  
 Cheyn, chain, 8/122  
 Chiere, CHERE, CHOERE, face,  
 countenance, 8/123, 12/232, 108/  
 3080  
 Chirkyng, groaning (*stridens*),  
 25/618  
 Clarré, a kind of wine, 50/1329  
 Cleer, serene, 45/1168  
 Clepe, to call, 4/17, 11/188, 17/  
 369  
 Clifte, fissure, cleft, 130/3721  
 Cliven, CLIVE, to stick, cling, ad-  
 here to, 41/1050, 101/2858, 159/  
 4600  
 Cloumben = CLOMBEN, climbed,  
 ascended, 57/1533  
 Coempcioun, coemption, 15/309  
 Coeterne, coeternal, 172/5019  
 Colasioun, collation, 125/3569  
 Collacioun, comparison, 165/4805  
 Combred, troubled, 94/2642  
 Commoeve, to move, 107/3043  
 Commoevyng, moving (*excitans*),  
 12/233  
 Communalité, commonwealth, 14/  
 271, 142/4108  
 Comparisoune, to compare, 58/  
 1567  
 Complyssen, to accomplish, 124/  
 3534

- Compotent, having the mastery  
 (*compos*), 172/5012  
 Compoune, to compose, form, 87/  
 2419, 93/2598  
 Comprénde, comprehend, 165/  
 4807  
 Comunableté, commonwealth, 13/  
 268  
 Comune, common, 9/140, 15/310  
 Confederacie, conspiracy, 53/1399  
 Confus, confused, 132/3788  
 Conjecte, to conjecture, 27/649,  
 114/3230  
 Conjoignen, to join, 92/2573  
 Conjuracioun, conspiracy, 18/394,  
 53/1399  
 Consequente, consequence, 84/  
 2323  
 Constreyne, to constrain, con-  
 tract, 5/38  
 Consul (CONSEILER), consul, 51/  
 1364, 1366  
 Consumpt (*consumptus*), con-  
 sumed, 60/1632  
 Contek, contest, strife, 130/3745  
 Contene, Contienen, to contain,  
 comprehend, 24/573, 116/3302  
 Contrarien, to be opposed to, ad-  
 verse to, 154/4440  
 Contrarious, adverse, opposite,  
 21/488, 53/1420  
 Contrefeten, to counterfeit, 173/  
 5031  
 Convenably, fitly, conveniently,  
 142/4089  
 Convict, convicted, 19/440  
 Cop, top, summit, 44/1159  
 Corage, mind, spirit, 118/3367,  
 119/3398  
 Corige, to correct, 125/3581  
 Corompe, Corrumpe, to become  
 corrupt, 98/2766, 96/2697  
 Corone, Coroune, a crown, 119/  
 3385, 91/2555  
 Corsed, cursed, 181/27  
 Corsednesse, cursedness, 90/2526  
 Corumpynge, corruption, 103/  
 2927  
 Cosyne, cousin, 106/3020  
 Couche, to lay, set, 35/890  
 Coupable, guilty, 10/172  
 Couth, known, 25/592  
 Coveite, to covet, 51/1365  
 Covenable, fit, convenient, 97/  
 2731  
 Covertour, Coverture, covering,  
 118/3361, 159/4622  
 Covetise, Coveytyse, covetous-  
 ness, 20/451, 181/32  
 Covine, deceit, collusion, 21/493  
 Coyn, money, 180/20  
 Creat, created, 99/2796  
 Crike, creek, 82/2260  
 Croppe, top, 69/1877  
 Curacioun, cure (*curatio*), 26/  
 632  
 Curage, 30/753. See Corage.  
 Cure, care, 64/1753  
 Dalf (*pret. of delven*), dug, delved,  
 51/1349  
 Damoisel, damsel, 30/762  
 Dampnacioun, condemnation, 16/  
 352  
 Daunten, Dawnte, to subdue,  
 daunt, 77/2115, 147/4258  
 Debonairly, mildly, 122/3490  
 Deboneire, gentle (*mitis*), 22/519;  
 good, 88/2450  
 Deceivable, deceptive, 77/2124  
 Dede, did, 181/28  
 Dedid, made dead, 127/3623  
 Deef, deaf, 4/18  
 Deere, dear, 37/941  
 Deep, death, 4/15

- Defaute, fault, defect, 18/402  
 Defende, to forbid, 34/859  
 Deffeted, enfeebled, weakened  
 30/735  
 Defoule, to defile, 21/491, 68/  
 1873  
 Degrees, steps, 6/54  
 Delices, delight, delights (*deli-  
 cia*), 38/968, 41/1062, 66/1787  
 Delitable, delectable, 30/756  
 Delitably, delightfully, 108/3078  
 Delve, should dig, 151/4352  
 Delver, a digger, 151/4359  
 Delyé, thin, fine, 5/43. Fr. *délié*.  
 Dempne, to condemn, 183/49  
 Denoye, to deny, 88/2464  
 Departe, to separate, 29/719  
 Depelyche, deeply, 160/4647  
 Depeynte, to depict, 111/3146  
 Depper, deeper, 27/649  
 Derke, Derken, to darken, 7/90,  
 20/448  
 Derworþe, Derworþi, precious, 31/  
 787, 41/1046  
 Desarmen, disarm, 13/241  
 Desceivaunce, deception, 81/2240  
 Desceive, Desseive, to deceive,  
 9/141, 38/967  
 Descryven, to describe, 99/2813  
 Desmaie, to dismay, 35/896  
 Desordene, inordinate, 36/912  
 Despoylynge, spoil, prey, 147/  
 4259  
 Destempraunce, severity, 97/  
 2749  
 Destinal, fatal, 135/3884  
 Destourbe, disturb, 143/4123  
 Destrat, distracted, 80/2216  
 Destreine, to constrain, bind, 54/  
 1441  
 Diffinisse, to define, 88/2459,  
 165/4808  
 Digne, worthy, just, 43/1124,  
 149/4297  
 Digneliche, worthily, 53/1427  
 Dirke, dark, 83/2306  
 Dirke, Dirken, to make dark,  
 darken, 5/48, 49  
 Dirkenesse, darkness, 23/535  
 Disceyvable, deceptive, 4/23  
 Discordable, discordant, 143/4133  
 Discorde, to disagree, 94/2632,  
 102/2898  
 Discordyng, disagreeing, discord-  
 ant, 68/1849  
 Discours, judgment, reason, 165/  
 4804  
 Discressioun, discretion, 93/2594  
 Discussed, dispersed, scattered, 9/  
 149  
 Disdaignen, to disdain (*indig-  
 nari*), 146/4213  
 Disencrese, to decrease, 173/5035  
 Disordinaunce, disorder, 150/4324  
 Dispenden, to spend, expend, 45/  
 1181  
 Dispone, to dispose, 135/3864  
 Disputisoun, disputation, 149/  
 4314  
 Disseveraunce, separation, 96/  
 2701  
 Dissimulen, to dissemble, 178/  
 5215  
 Distempre, intemperate, 121/3466  
 Distingwed, distinguished, 47/  
 1223  
 Dité, ditty, 134/3850  
 Divinour, diviner, 157/4541  
 Domesman, judge, 55/1467  
 Doom, judgment, 152/4395  
 Doumbe, dumb, 9/138  
 Doutous, Downtos, doubtful, 5/37  
 Dowblenness, duplicity, 182/63  
 Drede, dread, 21/497



- Dredeful, timid, 121/3468  
 Dredles, fearless, 106/3028  
 Dreint, Dreynt, drowned, drenched, 4/22, 7/99, 148/4271  
 Dresse, to direct, order, 137/3954, 142/4104  
 Drouppe, to drop, 20/455  
 Drow, drew, 15/300  
 Duely, duly, 22/530  
 Dulle, to become dull, 7/100  
 Dure, Duren, to last, 98/2755  
 Duske, to make dusk or dim, 5/48  
 Dyverses (*pl.*), divers, 8/120  
 Dyvynynge, divination, 157/4541  
 Echid, increased, 77/2134  
 Echynnys, sea-urchins, 82/2266  
 Egalité, equality, evenness (of mind), 42/1099  
 Egaly, equally, evenly, 43/1108, 157/4536  
 Egge, edge, 180/19  
 Egre, sharp, 25/610  
 Egren, to urge, excite, 141/4060  
 Eir, air, 45/1169  
 Ek, Eke, also, 40/1040, 181/36  
 Elde, old age, 5/48  
 Eldefadir, grandfather, 40/1042  
 Elder, older, 89/2493  
 Embelise, to embellish, 47/1223  
 Emperie, government, 51/1363  
 Emperisse, empress, 109/3098  
 Empoysenyng, poisoning, 11/206 (*venenum*).  
 Emprete, to imprint, 166/4839  
 Empreten, obtain (translates the Latin, *impetrent*), 159/4596. Perhaps a mistake for *empetren*.  
 Emptid, exhausted, 5/34  
 Enbaissyng, a debasing, 109/3107  
 Enbrase, embrace, 142/4092  
 Enchaufen, to make hot, *chafe*, 73/2020  
 Encharge, to impose, 178/5214  
 Enchaunteresse, enchantress, 123/3504  
 Endamagen, to damage, 15/316  
 Endirken, to obscure, 120/3418  
 Enditen, to indite, 4/4  
 Enfourme, to inform, instruct, 11/212, 13/263  
 Enhaunse, Enhawnse, to raise, exalt (*enhance*), 33/825  
 Enlace, to bind, entangle, entwine, perplex, 13/245, 80/2207, 149/4298  
 Enoynte, to anoint, 36/923  
 Enpeyren, to impair, 120/3418, 139/4015  
 Ensampl, example, 9/151  
 Entalenten, to excite, 168/4876  
 Entecche, defile, pollute, 120/3431  
 Entendyng, intent, looking steadfastly on, 8/126  
 Entente, to intend, 150/4345  
 Ententes, endeavours, labours, 7/79  
 Ententif, attentive, intent, 12/223, 29/731  
 Ententify, attentively, 103/2931  
 Enterchaunge, to interchange, 65/1785, 131/3753  
 Entercomunyng, commerce, communication, 57/1528  
 Entermedle, to intermix, 54/1436  
 Entré (*adytum*), 30/751  
 Entreachunge, to interchange, 39/1003  
 Entrelaced, intermingled, entangled, 105/2981  
 Entremete, intermeddle, 104/2964  
 Enveneme, to poison, infect, 120/3437

- Enviroune, to surround, 34/848,  
88/2437  
 Environyng, circumference, 164/  
4769  
 Erpeliche, Erpelyche, earthly, 52/  
1378, 69/1888  
 Erye, to plough, ear, 71/1964  
 Eschapen, to escape, 41/1054  
 Eschaufe, to become hot, to burn,  
22/524  
 Eschewen, to avoid, escape, 177/  
5172  
 Eschuyng, eschewing, 99/2802  
 Establisse, to establish, 15/311  
 Eterne, eternal; fro eterne = from  
eternity, 153/4422  
 Eternité, eternity, 171/4986  
 Evenliche, evenly, 25/599  
 Everyche, every, 11/190; each,  
181/48  
 Evesterre, evening star, 22/510  
 Excussyoun, execution, 184/65  
 Exercen, to exercise, practise, 52/  
1389  
 Exercitacioun, exercise, 140/4034  
 Exilyng, banishment, 11/205  
 Exite, to excite, 168/4881  
 Eyen, eyes, 183/36  
 Eyer, air, 170/4962  
  
 Fader, father, 18/414  
 Familiarité, familiarity, 30/740  
 Familers, familiars, 18/407  
 Fantesye, fancy, inclination, 181/  
51  
 Fasoun, fashion, 62/1693  
 Feffe, (?) 38/966  
 Fel, felle, fierce  
 Felawschipe, to accompany, 111/  
3141  
 Felefold, manifold, 30/738  
 Felliche, fiercely, 39/997  
 Felnesse, fierceness, 25/618  
 Felonous, wicked, depraved, 18/  
405  
 Felonye, crime, 124/3542  
 Fer, far, 23/554  
 Ferm, firm, 78/2148  
 Fermely, firmly, 157/4550  
 Ferne, fern, 64/1741  
 Ferne, distant, 60/1621  
 Ferpe, fourth, 56/1509  
 Festivaly, gaily, 59/1581  
 Festne, to fasten, fix, 10/166  
 Fette, fetched, 180/22  
 Fey, faith, truth, 112/3178  
 Ficchen, to fix, fasten, 45/1164,  
88/2446  
 Fieblesse, feebleness, 81/2240,  
112/3176  
 Fille, abundance, 48/1269  
 Flaumbe, flame, 98/2761  
 Fleme, to banish, 29/723  
 Fles, fleece, 180/18  
 Flete, Fleten, to float, flow, pass  
away, abound, 8/118, 28/690, 146/  
4223, 152/4376  
 Fletyng, flowing, 71/1961  
 Fley, flee, 149/4289  
 Fleyen, to flee, 125/3584  
 Flies, fleece, 50/1330  
 Flitte, to move, 68/1853  
 Flittyng, changing, fickle, 78/  
2150  
 Flityng, fitting, 12/220  
 Flotere, to float, 99/2817  
 Floteryng, floating, 87/2420  
 Flouren, to flourish, 131/3763  
 Fodre, fodder, 148/4267  
 Foleyen, Folyen, to act foolishly,  
67/1821, 1826  
 Folyly, foolishly, 12/220  
 Fooldest, foldest, 105/2984

- Forbrek, broke, interrupted, 108/  
3082  
 Fordoon, to undo, destroy, 62/  
1693  
 Fordryven, driven about, 12/215  
 Foreyne, foreign, 34/851  
 Forghe, furrow, 170/4959  
 Forheved, forehead, 16/346  
 Forknowyng, foreknowledge, 178  
/5187  
 Forlesten, left (*pret.* of *forleve*,  
*linquo*), 9/150  
 Forlete, to cease, 96/2697; leave,  
forsake, 22/525  
 Forleten (*p.p.*), neglected, forsaken, 5/47  
 Forliven, degenerate from (*de-*  
*genero*), 78/2163  
 Forlorn, lost, 34/858, 121/3452  
 Forme, an error for *ferme*, to make  
firm, 23/547  
 Forpampred, overpampered, 180/5  
 Fors, force; 'no fors,' no matter,  
182/13  
 Forsweryng, perjury, 23/536  
 Forpenke, to be sorry, grieved,  
41/1058  
 Forpære, to further, promote, 41/  
1057  
 Forpest, farthest, 136/3918  
 Forpi, therefore, 28/689  
 Fortroden, trodden upon,  
trampled, 109/3100  
 Fortunel, fortuitous, 152/4379  
 Fortunouse, Fortuouse, fortuitous,  
26/639, 38/983, 132/3779  
 Forwes, furrows, 180/12  
 Forwiter, foreknower, 178/5204  
 Foryetyn, forgotten, 101/2872  
 Foundement, foundation, 98/2754  
 Fowel, bird, 107/3053  
 Fram, from, 70/1931  
 Freele, frail, 61/1658  
 Frete, to eat, devour, 147/4252  
 Frounce, flounce, 9/147  
 Fructe, fruit, 180/3  
 Frutefiying, fructifying, fruitful,  
6/72  
 Fulfilling, satisfying, 79/2178  
 Fycche, fix, 108/3073. *See*  
*Ficchen*.  
 Fyn, end, 69/1892  
 Gabbe, 'gabbe I?' am I deceived?  
49/1308  
 Galentyne, a dish in ancient  
cookery made of sopped bread and  
spices (*Hulliwel*), 180/16  
 Galles, galls, 181/47  
 Gapen, to desire, be greedy for,  
15/324, 36/910  
 Gapinge, desire, 36/910  
 Gastnesse, terror, fear, 75/2079  
 Geaunt, giant, 104/2966  
 Gentilesse, nobility, 78/2154  
 Geometrien, geometrician, 91/  
2552  
 Gerdoned, rewarded, 120/3410  
 Gerdoun, reward, 13/265  
 Gerner, garner, 15/305  
 Gesse, Gessen, to deem, suppose,  
estimate, 17/378, 19/416, 65/1782  
 Gessinge, opinion, 21/475  
 Gest, guest, 38/979  
 Gideresse, a female guide, 108/  
3084  
 Gise, guise, mode, 71/1943  
 Giser, gizzard, 107/3054  
 Glotonus, greedy, 26/620  
 Gnodded, pounded, 180/11  
 Gobet, a bit (of gold), 51/1349  
 Godhed, divinity, 122/3492  
 Goost, spirit, ghost, 40/1036  
 Governaille, government (*guber-*  
*naculum*), 27/651



- Governauce, control, 32/813  
 Goye, joy, 179/5218  
 Graype, to devise, prepare, 19/438  
 Grobbe up, to grub up, 181/29  
 Grond, did grind, 180/15  
 Gynne, snare, trap, 82/2256  
 Gynner, beginner, 150/4330  
 Gyse, guise, mode, 134/3860  
  
 Habitacle, habitation, 57/1525  
 Habunde, to abound, 41/1073  
 Halden, to hold, 41/1053  
 Hale, to draw, drag, 61/1665  
 Halt, holds, 56/1504  
 Hardnesse, hardship, 132/3783  
 Hardyly, boldly, 34/857  
 Hastise, to hasten, 131/3746  
 Haunten, to frequent, 10/168; to  
 practise, exercise, 52/1389  
 Heeres, hairs, 4/12  
 Heet, heat, 28/699  
 Hef, raised, heaved, 5/41  
 Hele, health, 93/2623  
 Henten, to seize, 15/326  
 Hepen, to heap up, increase, 153/  
 4418  
 Herburghden, harboured, lodged,  
 53/1409  
 Herie, to praise, 109/3112  
 Hert, hart, 106/3027  
 Herted, hearted, 55/1466  
 Heve, to raise, heave, 171/4968  
 Heved, head, 4/13  
 Hevenelyche, heavenly, 8/105  
 Hevie, to make heavy, 171/4967  
 Hey, high, 22/523  
 Heyere, higher, 143/4117  
 Heyze, high, 171/4969  
 Hielde, pour, 35/899  
 Higte, to adorn, 8/116  
  
 Hoke, hook, 16/347  
 Holily, wholly, entirely, 90/2503  
 Homelyche, homely, 105/3001  
 Hond, hand, 20/449  
 Honter, a hunter, 12/228  
 Hool, whole, 46/1191  
 Hoolnesse, wholeness, 164/4754  
 Hoope, to hope, 17/384  
 Hore, hoary, 4/13  
 Humblesse, humility, 80/2213  
 Hungry tyme, time of famine, 15/  
 314  
 Hurlten, to rush against, to  
 oppose, 30/748, 167/4866  
 Hyene, hyæna, 185/35  
 Hyzt, is called, 9/154, 25/619  
 Hyzten, are called, 77/2126  
  
 Ibouzt, bought, 157/4540  
 Ibowed, bent, turned, 137/3949  
 Icharged, loaded, 71/1962  
 Igete, gotten, 36/908  
 Ilorn, lost, 62/1677  
 Imperial, august (*imperiosus*), 7/  
 91  
 Implie, to fold, enclose, 152/4379  
 Infortune, misfortune, 79/2197  
 Inmoeveable, immovable, 173/  
 5030  
 Inmoeveableté, immobility, 173/  
 5032  
 Inorschid, nourished, nurtured, 8  
 /128  
 I-nowh, enough, 180/11  
 Inperfit, imperfect, 83/2291  
 Inplitable (*inexplicabilis*), 15/315  
 Inprente, to imprint, 166/4832  
 Impressed, impressed, 167/4861  
 Inrest, innermost, 136/3913  
 Instaunce (*instantia*), presence,  
 174/5067

- Intil, into, 110/3139  
 Inwiþ, within, 32/801  
 Issest, issuest, 105/2983  
 Iwist, known, 156/4513
- Jangland, chattering, 68/1867  
 Jape-worthi, ridiculous, 157/4540  
 Jolyté, pleasure, 79/2189  
 Jowes, jaws, 15/323  
 Joygnen, to join, 54/1455  
 Joynture, juncture, joining, 46/1207  
 Juge, a judge, 19/431; to judge, 53/1427  
 Jugement, judgment, 114/3253
- Karf (*pret.* of Kerven), cut, 50/1337  
 Kembd, KEMBED, combed, 23/537  
 Kerve, to cut, 64/1740  
 Kevere, cover, obscure, 34/861  
 Keye, helm (*clavus*), 103/2926  
 Knowelechinge, knowledge, 168/4874  
 Knyzt, soldier, 111/3142  
 Konnyng, knowledge, 16/351  
 Korue (*p.p.*), cut, rent, 6/58  
 Kuytten, to cut, 147/4246  
 Kyd, known, 181/46  
 Kyndeliche, Kyndely, naturally, 101/2850, 114/3228  
 Kythen, to make known, show, 184/63
- Lache, slow, lazy, 122/3471  
 Lad (*p.p.*), led, 35/879  
 Laddre, ladder, 6/55  
 Lambyssh, lamb-like, 181/50  
 Languisse, to languish, 30/734, 130/3740  
 Lappe, flap, 9/146
- Largesse, liberality, 45/1183  
 Lasse, less, 22/508  
 Leche, Leecher, physician, 13/250, 114/3254, 139/3990  
 Leef, dear, 37/941  
 Leesen, Leese, to lose, 22/509, 43/1133  
 Lene, to give, 139/3993  
 Lenger, longer, 52/1370  
 Lesynge, loss, 141/4066  
 Lesynge, leasing, lie, 156/4525  
 Leten, to leave, 10/176; to esteem, 61/1666  
 Leve, permission, leave, 128/3658  
 Leveful, allowable, lawful, 10/176  
 Ligge, to lie, 60/1632, 147/4251  
 Liifly, lively, lifelike, 5/33  
 Likerous, lecherous, 72/1989  
 Litargie, lethargy, 9/140  
 Litestere, a dyer, 180/17  
 Lokyng, sight, 10/167  
 Loos, praise  
 Loop, loath, 40/1036  
 Lorel, a wretch, 21/495  
 Lorn, lost, 34/859  
 Lous, loose, free, 136/3926  
 Lykyng, pleasure, 31/771  
 Lymes, limbs, 71/1946  
 Lynage, lineage, 41/1070  
 Lythnesse, lightness, 98/2761  
 Lyzte goodes, temporal goods, 4/21  
 Lyztly, easily, 12/220  
 Lyztne, to enlighten, 128/3655  
 Lyztnesse, light, brightness, 8/106
- Maat, weary, dejected, 40/1037  
 Magistrat, magistracy, 72/1985  
 Maistresse, mistress, 10/169

- Malice, *nefas*, wickedness, 20/466  
Malyfice, *maleficium*, 20/468  
Manace, menace, 12/232  
Manass, to menace, 118/3365  
Manassyng, threatening, 44/1158  
Mareis, Mareys, marsh, 56/1513, 97/2735  
Margarits, pearls, 94/2650  
Marye, pith, marrow, 97/2744  
Maugré, in spite of, 70/1928  
Mede, meed, reward, 91/2555  
Medle, to mix, *Medelyng*, mixing, mixture, 20/449, 122/3482, 126/3594  
Meenelyche, moderate, 28/706  
Meistresse, mistress, 17/363  
Melle, mill, 180/6  
Mene, the mean or middle path, 146/4228  
Meremaydenes, mermaids, 7/83  
Merken, to mark, 16/346  
Mervaille, Merveile, marvel, 18/403, 132/3787  
Merveilen, to marvel, 46/1205  
Mervelyng, wondering, 10/161  
Mest, most, 42/1081  
Mesuren, to measure, 65/1782  
Meyné, servants, domestics, 47/1243  
Mirie, pleasant, sweet, 4/16  
Mirinesse, pleasure, 66/1793  
Misericorde, mercy, pity, 107/3057  
Mistourne, to misturn, mislead, 69/1894  
Mochel, great, 62/1674, 109/3110  
Moeveable, mobile, fickle, 133/3817  
Moeven, to move, 8/112, 150/4329  
Moewyng, moving, motion, 130/3742  
Mokere, to hoard up, 45/1182  
Mokere, miser, 45/1182. A mistake for *mokerere*.  
Molesté, trouble, grief, 85/2346  
Monstre, prodigy, 18/403  
More, greater, 129/3697  
Morwe, morning, 22/513  
Mosten (*pl.*), must, 166/4836  
Mot, must, 40/1038  
Mowen, be able, 25/608  
Mowyng, ability, power, 124/3548  
Myche, much, 21/475  
Mychel, much, 46/1215  
Myntyng, purposing, endeavouring, 7/101  
Myrie, pleasant, 45/1165  
Myrily, pleasantly, 59/1582  
Myrpes, pleasures, 132/3782  
Mys, badly, wrongly, 131/3772  
Mysese, grievance, trouble, 15/299  
Mysknowyng, ignorant, 61/1659  
Mysweys, wrong paths, 149/4309  
Naie, to refuse, 4/19  
Nake, to make naked, 148/4288  
Nameles, unrenowned, 131/3762  
Namelyche, Namly, especially, 124/3550  
Nare, were not, 10/176  
Nart, art not, 23/556  
Narwe, narrow, 57/1520  
Nas, was not, 180/9  
Napeles, nevertheless, 6/57  
Nat, not, 23/556  
Necesseden, necessitated, 87/2419  
Nedely, of necessity, 84/2334  
Negardye, (*sb.*) misers, 183/53  
Nere, were not, 26/646



- Neþemaste, lowest, nethermost, 6/56  
 Neþereste, lowest, 6/50  
 Newe, to renew, 137/3938  
 Newliche, recently, 122/3489  
 Nice, foolish, 148/4287  
 Nil, will not, 107/3055  
 Nillynge, being unwilling, 97/2718  
 Nilt, wilt not, 112/3193  
 Nis, is not, 12/218  
 Niste, knew not, 102/2882  
 Noblesse, nobleness, 37/947  
 Nobley, nobility, nobleness, 37/945  
 Nolden, would not, 52/1369  
 Norice, nurse, 10/167  
 Norisse, to nourish, 79/2174  
 Norry, nursling, pupil, 10/173  
 Norssinge, nourishment, support, 47/1231; nutriment, 37/932  
 Not, know not (*1st pers.*), 27/649  
 Notful, useful, 7/85  
 Nounpower, impotence, 75/2074  
 Nouþir, neither, 160/4644  
 Noyse, to make a noise (about a thing), to brag, 79/2171  
 Nurry (*see* Norry), 86/2386  
 Nys, is not, 45/1175  
  
 O, one, 24/564  
 Obeisaunt, obedient, 13/266, 32/814  
 Object, presented, 168/4889  
 Occuþye, to seize, 146/4227  
 Offence, hurt, damage, 180/19  
 Offensioun, offence, 20/473  
 Olifuntz, elephants, 80/2223  
 Onknowyn, unknown, 180/6  
 Onlyche, only, 171/4968  
  
 Onone, Onoon, at once, anon, 23/553, 74/2027  
 Ony, any, 21/488  
 Ooned, united, 135/3879  
 Oor, oar, 50/1338  
 Oosteresse, hostess, 122/3495  
 Or, ere, before, 9/143  
 Ordeinly, orderly, 140/4044  
 Ordenour, ordainer, 109/3110  
 Ordeyne, orderly, 109/3109  
 Ordinat, ordered, settled, 12/229  
 Ordinee, orderly, 102/2902  
 Ordure, filth, 29/716  
 Ostelmentz, furniture, goods, 48/1266  
 Oþerweyes, otherwise (*aliter*), 164/4772  
 Outerage, excess, 50/1326  
 Outerest, extremest, remotest, 55/1469, 89/2476  
 Outerly, utterly, 108/3081  
 Outraien, do harm (?), 78/2162  
 Over-comere, conqueror, 8/109  
 Overmaste, highest, uppermost, 6/57  
 Overmyche, overmuch, very much, 79/2191  
 Overoolde, very old, 11/209  
 Overþrowen, prostrate, 21/497  
 Overþrowyng, forward, headstrong, 7/99, 141/4058  
 Overtymelyche, untimely, 4/13  
 Owh, an exclamation (*papæ*), 112/3166  
 Owtrage, excess, 180/5  
  
 Paied, satisfied, 58/1549  
 Paleis, pale, 24/574  
 Palude, marsh, 148/4262  
 Paraventure, peradventure, 18/402  
 Parchemyn, parchment, 166/4835

- Parsoners, sharers, partakers, 170/4942  
 Partles, without a share, 120/3409  
 Pas, paces, 19/442  
 Paysyble, peaceable, peaceful, 180/1  
 Peisible, quiet, placid, 23/550, 88/2450  
 Percen, to pierce, 81/2236  
 Perdurable, lasting, perpetual, 5/44, 21/503  
 Perdurableté, immortality, 58/1557  
 Perfityche, *Perfitly*, perfectly, 87/2426, 133/3833  
 Perfourny, to afford, furnish, 67/1823  
 Perisse, to perish, 96/2712  
 Perturbacioun, perturbation, 7/98  
 Perverte, to destroy, 11/201  
 Peyne, punishment, 121/3439  
 Piment, a kind of drink, 50/1329  
 Plenté, fulness, 173/5037  
 Plentevous, affluent, 67/1824  
 Plentivous, yielding abundantly, fertile, 64/1739  
 Plentivously, abundantly, 25/592  
 Plete, argue, plead, 33/833  
 Pletyngus, pleadings, debates (at law), 70/1933  
 Pleyne, to complain, 31/777  
 Pleynellyche, plainly, 28/681  
 Pleynt, complaint, 110/3122  
 Plonge, Ploungen, to plunge, 7/89, 65/1784  
 Ploungy, wet, rainy (*imbrifer*), 64/1745  
 Polute, polluted, 20/450  
 Pose, to put a case, cf. put a *poser*, 162/4686  
 Pousté, power, 131/3766  
 Pownage, pasturage, 180/7  
 Poyntel, style, 166/4838  
 Preiere, prayer, 107/3044  
 Preisen, to estimate, judge, 7/379  
 Preisynge, praising, 77/2131  
 Preke, to prick, 85/2346  
 Prenostik, prognostic, 183/54  
 Presentarie, present, 178/5196  
 Preterit, preterite, past, 171/4990  
 Pretorie, the imperial body-guard, 15/317  
 Prevé, secret, 121/3464  
 Preven, to prove, 90/2503  
 Prie, to pray, 25/600  
 Pris, value; 'worpi of *pris*,' precious, 24/583  
 Proche, to approach, 145/4182  
 Proeve, to approve, 154/4456  
 Punisse, to punish, 22/531  
 Puplicke, to publish, spread, propagate, 58/1549, 98/2753  
 Purper, purple, 25/617  
 Purpose, to propose, 176/5148  
 Purveaunce, providence, 134/3863  
 Purveiable, provident, foreseeing, 68/1854  
 Purveie, to ordain, order, 21/478  
 Purvyance, providence, 99/2795  
 Quereles, complaints, 70/1932  
 Quik, living, 134/3839  
 Quyene, queen, 183/43  
 Quyerne, a mill, 180/6  
 Rafte, bereft, 147/4259  
 Raþer, earlier, former, 30/735  
 Raviner, a plunderer, 12/228  
 Ravische, to snatch, 11/190  
 Ravyne, plunder, rapine, 15/302, 36/909

- Ravynour, plunderer, 121/3460  
 Ravysse, to carry off, 131/3774  
 Real, royal, 19/420  
 Recche, to care, reck, 33/827, 38  
 987  
 Recompensacioun, recompense,  
 130/3724  
 Recorde, to recount, recall, 92/  
 2580, 101/2871  
 Reddowr, severity, rigour, 182/13  
 Redenese, redness, flushing, 7/88  
 Redoutable, venerable, 131/3763  
 Redoute, to fear, 10/178, 57/1535  
 Redy = rody, red, ruddy, 39/995  
 Refet, refreshed, 143/4116  
 Reft (away), carried off, 22/521  
 Refut, refuge, 94/2644  
 Regne, kingdom, 67/1843  
 Regnen, to reign, rule, 29/726  
 Remewe, to remove, 19/441  
 Remorde, to vex, trouble, 140/  
 4030  
 Remuable, able to remove from  
 one place to another, 168/4898  
 Remuen, to remove, 52/1394  
 Renomed, renowned, 41/1070,  
 78/2143  
 Renovele, to renew, 98/2752  
 Replenisse, to replenish, 20/469  
 Repreve, to reprove, 167/4857  
 Repugnien, to be repugnant to,  
 154/4440  
 Requerable, desirable, 52/1377  
 Requere, to require, 99/2790  
 Rescove, to recover, 133/3809  
 Rescove, to rescue, 35/881  
 Resolve, to loosen, melt, 133/3814  
 Resoune, to resound, 107/3036  
 Rethoryen, rhetorical, 30/759  
 Rewlyche, pitiable, sorrowful,  
 35/878
- Risorse = recourse (*recursus*),  
 course, 8/108  
 Rody, ruddy, 143/4122  
 Roos, roes, 82/2258  
 Rosene, roseat, 8/117  
 Route, company, 47/1243  
 Royle, to run, roll, 29/717  
 Rynnyng, running, 50/1335  
 Ryztwisnesse, righteousness,  
 equity, 16/331
- Sachel, satchel, sack, 12/223  
 Sad, stable, 41/1064  
 Saddenese, stability, 110/3123  
 Sarpuler, a sack made of coarse  
 cloth (*Sarcinula*), 12/223  
 Sauuacioun, safety, salvation,  
 97/2723  
 Sau3, Say, saw, 8/106, 9/137  
 Saye, sawest, 37/958  
 Schad, shed, 4/13  
 Schrew, a wicked person, a  
 wretch, 12/217  
 Schrewed, wicked, 18/398  
 Schrewednesse, wickedness, 18/  
 401, 117/3324  
 Schronk, shrunk, 5/38  
 Schulden (*pl.*), should, 9/132  
 Schullen (*pl.*), shall, 25/605  
 Scom, foam, froth, 148/4281  
 Scripture, writing, 17/382  
 Sege, seat, 13/258  
 Seien (*pl.*), saw, 51/1344  
 Seien (*p.p.*), seen, 6/54  
 Selde, seldom, 133/3818  
 Seler, cellar, 35/890  
 Selily, happily, blissfully, 42/1076  
 Selve, very, 5/42  
 Semblable, like, 48/1279  
 Semblaunce, likeness, 142/4106  
 Semblaunt, appearance, counten-  
 ance, 5/31



- Senglely, singly, 85/2369  
 Sensibilités, sensations, 166/4830  
 Servage, servitude, 153/4411  
 Sewe, to follow, 88/2441  
 Seye, sawest, 37/955  
 Seyntuaries, sanctuaries, 16/343  
 Shad, divided, spread, 136/3922  
 Sholdres, shoulders, 148/4281  
 Sich, such, 6/67  
 Sikerly, certainly, 94/2635  
 Singler, individual, single, 57/  
 1529  
 Singlerly, singly, 135/3890  
 Sittyng, fitting, becoming, 10/176  
 Skilynge, reason, 137/3931  
 Slaken, to slake (hunger), 50/  
 1326  
 Slede, sledge, 110/3131  
 Sleen, Slen, to slay, 53/1409,  
 55/1460  
 Slou3, slew, 55/1461  
 Smaragde, emerald, 94/2650  
 Smerte, to smart, pain, 39/1011  
 Smot, smote, 147/4254  
 Smoþe, smooth, 8/112  
 Sodeyn, sudden, 10/161  
 Somedel, somewhat, 25/606  
 Somer, summer, 22/517  
 Songen (*p.p.*), sung, 108/3078  
 Soory, sorry, grievous, 38/978  
 Soþe, true, 17/377, 118/3352  
 Soþefastly, truly, 89/2481  
 Soþely, truly, 169/4918  
 Soþenesse, truth, 26/641  
 Sothfast, true, 61/1652  
 Soun, sound, 68/1852  
 Soune, to sound, 37/929  
 Sounyng, sounding, roaring, 8/  
 111  
 Sovereyn, supreme, 90/2508  
 Sovereynely, supremely, 91/2545  
 Sourmounte, to surpass, 80/2223  
 Spece, species, 165/4789  
 Speculacioun, looking, contem-  
 plation, 153/4408  
 Spedeful, Spedful, efficacious,  
 conducive, 125/3570, 161/4671  
 Speden, to make clear, explain,  
 161/4667  
 Spere, sphere, 8/108  
 Sperkele, spark, 104/2971  
 Sprad, spread (*p.p.*), 9/156  
 Stableté, stability, 137/3950  
 Stablise, to establish, 134/3860  
 Stably, firmly, 135/3890  
 Stappe, step, 170/4963  
 Staunche, to satisfy, 71/1948,  
 1961  
 Stere, to move (*agitare*), 106/  
 3015  
 Sterre, star, 36/903  
 Sterry, starry, 36/904  
 Sterten, to start, 104/2971  
 Stidefastnesse, stability, strength,  
 97/2748  
 Stidfast, steadfast, 182/17  
 Stien, to ascend, 88/2444  
 Stiere, *steer*, rudder (*gubernacu-  
 lum*), 103/2926  
 Stiern, stern, 60/1628  
 Stoon, stone, 45/1165  
 Stormyng, making stormy, 29/  
 712  
 Stont, stands, 9/154  
 Stoundes, times, 178/5187  
 Strau3t, stretched, extended, 170/  
 4957  
 Strengere, stronger, 12/221  
 Strenkeþ, strength, 12/240  
 Streyhte, stretched, 63/1702  
 Streyne, to restrain, 150/4325

- Strond, strand, 51/1339  
 Strook, stroke, 153/4433  
 Strumpet, 6/66  
 Styte, to ascend, 143/4117  
 Stynte, to stop, 37/929  
 Styntyng, stopping, ceasing, 61/1638  
 Suasioun, persuasion (*suadela*), 30/759  
 Subgit, subject, 48/1273  
 Submytte, to compel, force (*summitto*), 19/434  
 Sudeyn, sudden, 30/752  
 Suffisaunce, sufficiency, 70/1922  
 Suffisaunt, sufficient, 70/1924  
 Suffisauntly, sufficiently, 133/3833  
 Summitte, Summytte, to submit, 49/1288, 136/3924  
 Superfice, surface, 81/2238  
 Supplien, to supplicate, 80/2210  
 Surté, security, 181/46  
 Sustigne, to sustain, 183/41  
 Sweighe, whirl, circular motion (*turbo*), 22/504  
 Swerd, sword, 19/438  
 Swety, sweaty, 181/28  
 Sweyes, whirlings, 32/816  
 Swich, such, 20/446  
 Swolve, to swallow, 98/2777  
 Syker, secure, safe, 12/224, 16/333  
 Sykernes, security, safety, 9/132  
 Symplesse, simplicity, 136/3914  
 Syn, since, 31/789  
 Sypen, since, 32/802  
 Talent, affection, desire, will, 6/71, 168/4887  
 Taylage, tollage, 181/524  
 þar, need, 38/987  
 þerwhiles, whilst, 176/5150  
 þilke, the same, that, 99/2814  
 þo, þoo (*pl.*), the, 11/200, 168/4886  
 þondre, thunder, 45/1166  
 þoru3, through, 11/202  
 þreschefolde, threshold, 7/89  
 þrest, thirst, 36/914, 71/1945  
 þreste, þresten, thrust, 47/1237, 148/4283  
 Throf, throve, flourished, 74/2050  
 þrust, thirst, 107/3053  
 Til, to, 69/1891  
 Tilier, a tiller, 151/4352  
 To-breke, break in pieces, 88/2447  
 Todrowen (*pl.*), drew asunder, 11/193  
 Toforne, before, 177/5184  
 Togidres, together, 53/1421  
 To hepe, together, 140/4029  
 Tokene, to token, 26/624  
 Tollen, to draw, 56/1496  
 Torenten (*pl.*), rent asunder, 11/194  
 To-teren, tear in pieces, 68/1865  
 Traas, Trais, trace, track, 170/4958, 4963  
 Transporten, throw on (*trans-ferre*), 19/419  
 Travaille, labour, toil, 10/174  
 Travayle, to toil, labour, 64/1754  
 Travayle, labour, 148/4286  
 Tregedie, tragedy, 77/2126  
 Tregedien, tragedian, 77/2125  
 Trenden, to roll, turn, 100/2835  
 Troublable, troublesome, 118/3369  
 Trouble, turbid, stormy, 29/711  
 Troubly, troubled, cloudy (*nubilus*), 133/3819  
 Trowen, to trow, believe, 20/468, 152/4399

- Twitre, to twitter, 68/1875  
 Twynkel, to wink, 38/971  
 Tylienge, tilling, 151/4347  
 Tyren, to tear, 107/3055  
  
 Umblesse, humility, 181/55  
 Unagreable, unpleasant, disagreeable, 4/25  
 Unassaep, untried, 42/1082  
 Unbitide, not to happen, 161/4678  
 Unbowed, unbent, 148/4284  
 Uncovenable, unmeet, importunate (*importunus*), 141/4058  
 Unde fouled, undefiled, 40/1023  
 Undepartable, inseparable, 120/3422  
 Underput, put under, subject, 28/696  
 Understonde, to understand, 30/733, 43/1120  
 Undigne, unworthy, 54/1444  
 Undirnep, underneath, 75/2074  
 Undiscomfited, not discomfited (*invictus*), 12/232  
 Undoutous, indubitable, 149/4315  
 Uneschewably, unavoidable, 157/4531  
 Ungentil, ignoble, 41/1070  
 Ungrobbed, ungrubbed, 180/14  
 Unhonestee, disreputableness, 24/587  
 Unhoped, unexpected, 139/4006  
 Université, whole, 165/4797  
 Unjoynen, Unjoynen, to separate, 151/4373  
 Unknowyng, ignorant, 139/3997  
 Unknytten, to unloose (*dissolvere*), 154/4459  
 Unkonnyng, Unkunnyng, unknowing, ignorant, 7/76, 11/202  
 Unkorven, uncut, 180/14  
 Unkouþ, unknown, foreign, 34/870  
 Unlace, to disentangle, 105/2982  
 Unleueful, illicit, unlawful, 154/4456  
 Unmeke, fierce, cruel, 148/4267  
 Unmoeveable, immovable, 136/3901  
 Unmoeveableté, immobility, 136/3921  
 Unmyzty, weak, impotent, 13/241  
 Unnep, scarcely, 27/652  
 Unparygal, unequal, 63/1708  
 Unpitouse, cruel, 4/24  
 Unpleyten, to explain, 61/1647  
 Unplite, explain, unfold, 167/4843  
 Unpunished, unpunished, 21/498  
 Unpurveyed, unforeseen, 30/743  
 Unraced, unbroken, whole, 110/3115  
 Unryztyful, unjust, 10/185  
 Unryztyfully, unrightfully, unjustly, 23/533  
 Unscience, unreal knowledge, no knowledge, 156/4515  
 Unsely, wretched, 39/1013  
 Unselynesse, wretchedness, 124/3544  
 Unskilfully, unwisely, improperly, 18/407  
 Unsolempne, not famous, not celebrated, 11/210  
 Unsowe, unsown, 180/10  
 Unspedful, unsuccessful, 178/5210  
 Unstauncheable, unlimited, infinite, 58/1573  
 Unstaunched, uncurbed, unrestrained, 54/1439  
 Unsuffrable, intolerable, 79/2179  
 Unusage, unfrequency, 57/1528



- Untretable, inexorable, implacable, 61/1641  
 Unwar, unexpected, 35/886  
 Unwarly, unaware, unexpectedly, 4/10  
 Unwemmed, inviolate, 40/1023, 178/5201  
 Unwened, unexpected, 139/4006  
 Unwoot, knows not, 175/5099  
 Unworshipful, dishonoured, 75/2054  
 Uphepyng, heaping up, 37/951  
 Upsodoun, upside down, 48/1274, 156/4501  
 Upsprong, upsprung, 180/10  
 Used, accustomed, wonted, 22/512  
 Uterreste, extremest, outermost, 7/95  
  
 Vanisse, to vanish, 74/2027  
 Variaunt, varying, 22/518  
 Vengerisse, a she-avenger, 107/3048  
 Verray, Verrey, true, 19/429  
 Vilfully (Wilsfully), wilfully, 116/3295  
 Voide, having an empty purse (*vacuus*), 50/1316  
 Voyded (of), emptied of, free from, 181/50  
  
 Wakyng, watchful, 148/4263  
 Walwe, to toss, 51/1361  
 Walwyng, tossing, 29/712  
 Wan, did win, 147/4240  
 War, be aware, take care, 145/4200  
 Warne, to refuse, deny, 37/950  
 Wawe, a wave, 8/115  
 Wayk, weak, 28/706  
 Weep (*pret.*), wept, 35/883  
 Welde, wild, 180/17. It may mean *boiled*, since another copy reads *wellyd*.  
 Weleful, Welful, prosperous, joyful, 4/15  
 Welefulnessse, Welfulnesse, prosperity, felicity, 11/188, 21/478  
 Welken, to wither, fade, 146/4224  
 Welkne, welkin, 184/62  
 Welle, well, source, 157/4548  
 Wende, weened, thought, 53/1397  
 Wenge, wing, 170/4961  
 Wenyng, opinion, 172/5022  
 Wepen (*p.p.*), wept, 25/596  
 Wepli, tearful, 5/29  
 Werdes, fates, destinies, 4/10  
 Werreye, to make war, 181/25  
 Weten, to know, 156/4519  
 Wax, wax, 167/4840  
 Weyve, to waive, forsake, 29/722  
 Wham, whom, 89/2482  
 Whelwe, to toss, roll, 39/1001  
 Whiderward, whither, 177/5171  
 Whist, hushed, 51/1341  
 Wierdes, fates, destinies, 12/231  
 Wikke, wicked, bad, 64/1743  
 Willyng, desire, 178/5203  
 Wilne, to desire, 17/367  
 Wilnyng, desire, 98/2781  
 Wirche, to work, 12/235  
 Wirchyng, working, operation, 95/2677  
 Wist, known, 170/4937  
 Witen, to know, learn, 88/2458, 132/3776, 160/4624  
 Wipdraw, withdrew, 64/1751  
 Wiphalden, to withhold, 142/4105  
 Wipoute forþe, outwardly, 165/4803  
 Wipseid, denied, 90/2501

- Wipstant, withstand, 29/715  
 Wipstonde (*p.p.*), withstood, 14/  
 290  
 Witnesfully, attestedly, publicly,  
 131/3765  
 Witynge, knowledge, 156/4526  
 Wod, woad, 180/17  
 Wod, Wode, mad, raging, 12/225  
 Wode, wood, 39/995  
 Wodenesse, rage, madness, 45/  
 1169, 107/3052  
 Wolen (*pl.*), will, 94/2645  
 Woltow, wilt thou, 97/2741  
 Wone, to dwell, 60/1627  
 Woode, Wode, furious, mad, 25/  
 600  
 Woode, to rage, 123/3515  
 Woodnesse, rage, madness, 107/  
 3052  
 Woot, knows, 43/1128  
 Woep, to weep, 36/905  
 Worchen, to work, 178/5215  
 Wost, knowest, 19/423  
 Woxe, to increase, wax, grow,  
 25/608  
 Woxen (*p.p.*), grown, 25/607  
 Wrekere, avenger, 128/3665  
 Wrekying, vengeance, 147/4238  
 Wropely, grieved, sad, 7/87  
 Wrypen, twist, turn, wrest, 154/  
 4452  
 Wymple, to cover with a veil or  
 wimple, 31/774  
 Wyt, sense, 164/4771  
 Wyzt, wight, person, 19/425  
  
 Yave (*pl.*), gave, 180/4  
 Yben, been, 162/4698  
 Ybeyen, to obey, 105/2998  
 Ycauzt, caught, captured, 118/  
 3371  
 Ycleped, called, 150/4346  
  
 Ydel, 'in ydel,' in vain, 5/43  
 Ydred, feared, 33/825  
 Yfelawshipped, associated, united,  
 53/1421  
 Yficched, fixed, 136/3910  
 Yfinissed, finished, 125/3558  
 Yflit, flitted, removed, 8/108  
 Ygeten, gotten, 65/1776  
 Yhardid, hardened, 133/3814  
 Yheued, made heavy, 171/4974  
 Ylad, led, 37/956, 172/5022  
 Ylete, permitted, 130/3730  
 Ylett, hindered, 161/4674  
 Ylorn, lost, 147/4250  
 Ymaginable, possessing imagina-  
 tion, 166/4812  
 Ymaked, made, 87/2426  
 Ymedeled, mixed, 140/4029  
 Ynou3, enough, 71/1947  
 Yplitid, pleated, folded, 9/147  
 YPORVEYID, YPURVEID, foreseen,  
 155/4467, 4468  
 Ysen, seen, 72/1982  
 Yshad, shed, scattered, 68/1874  
 Yshet, shut, 170/4955  
 Ysmyte, smitten, 80/2202  
 Yspedd, made clear, determined,  
 161/4657; despatched, 149/4295  
 Yspendyd, examined (*expediero*),  
 161/4668  
 Ysprad, spread, 78/2140  
 Yspranid, sprinkled, mixed, 42/  
 1102. *Read* yspraind.  
 Ystrengēped, strengthened, 175/  
 5098  
 Ypewed, behaved, 139/4008  
 Yprongen, pressed, squeezed, 57/  
 1521  
 Ytravailed, laboured, 155/4469  
 Ytretid, handled, performed, 131/  
 3765

- Yvel, evil, 105/2976  
 Ywened, believed, 145/4178  
 Ywist, known, 155/4475  
 Ywoven, woven, 6/51  
 Ywyst, known, 164/4759  
 Y<sub>3</sub>even, given, 141/4069  
  
 3af, gave, 8/130  
 3eelde, 3elde, seldom, 39/1002,  
     52/1372  
 3eld, yielded, 147/4253  
  
 3elden, to yield, 149/4303  
 3eve, to give, 149/4291  
 3evyng, giving, 45/1188  
 3if, if, 9/131  
 3is, yes, 103/2919  
 3isterday, yesterday, 171/4994  
 3itte, yet, 156/4508  
 3ok, 3okke, yoke, 32/802, 60/1620  
 3olde (*p.p.*), yielded, 25/599  
 3onge, young, 35/889  
 3oupe, youth, 10/168

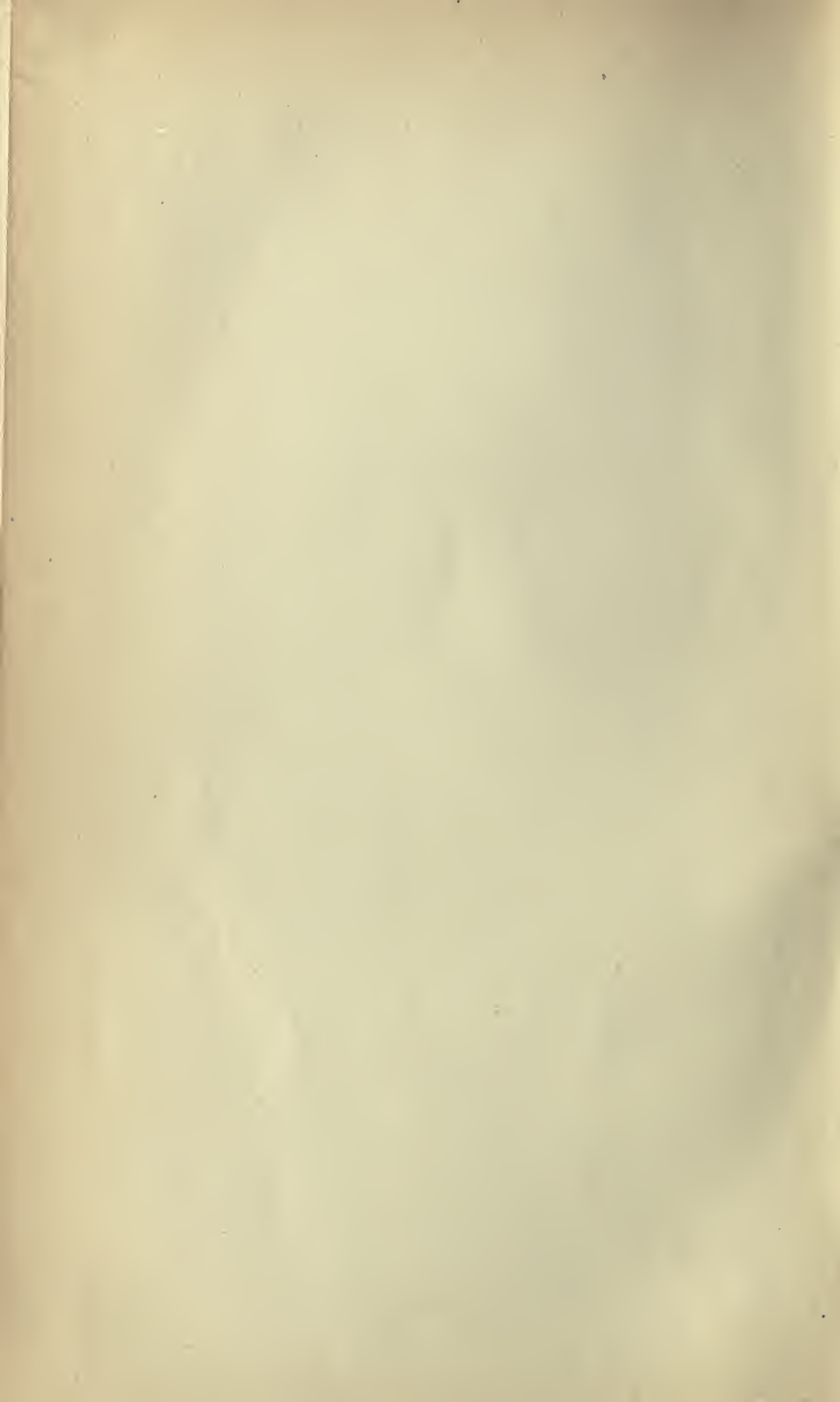


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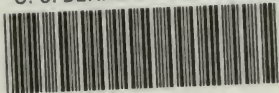
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